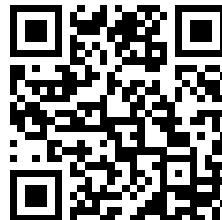

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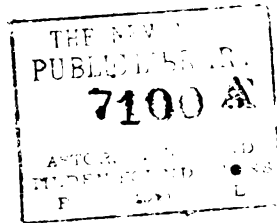


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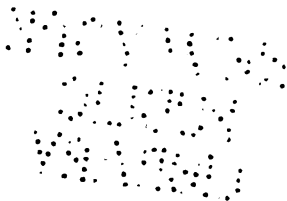
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IN DANGER.

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FOURTH SERIES.

Too Bad.



LISTEN to my tale!

"How do you feel now, Dick?"

"Beastly."

"And you, Tom?"

"Sir, I could curse my grandmother. How are you?"

"Well, I feel as if I wish the world had only one head, and I could punch it—hard."

Then there was silence, and we sat and watched.

I say watched, but we could not watch, for a dozen steamers might have nearly run us down, one after the other, and we should not have seen them, as we sat in that little yacht, ten miles off the Isle of Wight, with a great, soft, thick flannel hanging all round us.

No, it was not flannel, though it looked wonderfully like it, but one of those sea fogs that come slowly rolling along over the calm sea, same as this did, apparently without a breath of air sufficient to move main-sail or jib.

We saw it coming, and it made Dick swear, as it completely shut us in, till we lay there waiting in as bad humours as ever afflicted three men; for—there, pity us, all of you!—we had gone out for a sail, the wind had dropped, and that horrible idiot, Tom, had forgotten the tobacco.

It was quite evening before a breeze sprang up, swept off the fog, and away we bowled for Stokes Bay, having promised to be in town that night.

As luck would have it, there was just time to give the little cutter in charge of Dick's man, and rush off to the station; but as we took our seats, with the last bell ringing, Dick turned to me sharply, with—

"Where's Tom?"

"Out of the way, of course," I said, savagely. "He's been doing it nicely all day. Now he's lost the train; and Biggles will bully me at the office to-morrow because he's not there. Hang Tom!"

"What for?" he cried, climbing into the carriage, with two porters pushing him so violently behind, as the train moved on, that when they gave the finishing touch by banging the door, Tom was shot head first, as if out of a catapult, right into the most protuberant part of a crusty-looking old gentleman in the far corner.

"My head went right on the second button from the top," whispered Tom to me, after due apologies had been made, and the old gentleman's indignant storm had subsided into a dull, muttering thunder.

"Where did you get to?" growled Dick—"muddling it all along. Tom, you've regularly spoiled our day. There, hang it, and now we've got no tobacco!"

Tom nudged me, and showed me a big packet in his jacket pocket.

"What?" I said, excitedly, "did you stop behind to get some?"

"Of course I did," said Tom.

"What!" cried Dick, joyfully—"did you stop back and get some tobacco? Tom, my son, I forgive you all. Absolution, my son—absolution."

And before Tom could get out of the way, Dick threw his arms round him, hugged him to his breast, and then set him free; but he had managed to obtain possession of the tobacco, which he now began to open.

"Is that young man mad?" said the stout, crusty old gentleman, turning to me, as the train now began to spin along for a good run before we stopped at Wokingstoke.

"No, sir," said Dick, adopting his high faluting style—"no, sir, I am not mad; but you see before you a weary, hungry traveller, who has suddenly, in crossing the desert, come upon a palm-shaded oasis, which offers him corn and wine, and oil olive, and honey, and springs of sweet water. Behold!"

He held up the tightly done-up packet, from which he had been carefully skinning the paper and glistening tinfoil; when the old gentleman gave a snort, like a rhinoceros about to charge, and retired behind a newspaper, which he could not see to read.

"Tom," said Dick, "take it as an established fact, old man, that you are down in my will."

"What for—the old black meerschaum?"

"Or else for the old lead baccy-box," said Dick, beginning to fill his pipe.

"But you can't smoke," I said, in an undertone—"not a smoking carriage."

I nodded in the direction of the old gentleman.

"Not smoke," he said, in dismay. "Man, I must."

"So must I," said Tom, producing his pipe, and filling.

"And I'm dying for one," I said. "I beg pardon," I went on, turning to the old gentleman, "I hope you do not object to smoking."

"Sir!" he shouted, dashing down his paper, "I do—I hate it. I dislike it in every form. It is the bane of society, the disgrace of the nation, the cause of crime, the filler of our prisons, the road to the gallows."

Smoking, sir, is an abomination, and the degeneration of our race. The skeleton hand of Death has turned his hour-glass for the blind bats who smoke."

"Phew-w-w!" whistled Tom.

"This is not a smoking carriage," continued the old gentleman, "and you can't smoke here."

"But, sir," said Dick, "you see three men who have had nothing since breakfast, neither bite nor sup, and we are dying for a smoke."

"Then you'd better die, sir," said the old gentleman, savagely.

"Can't be spared," said Dick, quietly. "Wanted at the Inland Avenue Office."

We all subsided into sulky silence, and the train dashed on for a while, when Dick made an appeal.

"If you would kindly open the window, sir, and sit facing it, I don't think we should annoy you," said Dick, fingering his well-filled pipe.

"Sir, I shall not allow smoking in this carriage," said the old gentleman, decisively; and his face and his bald head turned all over of a nice warm pink.

We subsided again, and sat looking at one another. For my part, I felt faint and ill for want of refreshment; and holding, as I did, a full pipe in my hand, which would have comforted, dulled the gnawings of hunger, and calmed the burning thirst, the position was decidedly tantalizing.

On flew the train—fortunately, a fast one; but it would be an hour before we could get relief, or change into another carriage, and, like a fat tyrant, our old incubus sat in his corner, and gloated over our sufferings.

"Would it be wrong to pitch him out?" said Tom, in a whisper to me.

"Well," I said, in the same tone, "I don't think it would be wrong; but Government might object."

"Look at Dick," whispered Tom again.

I did look; for at that moment Dick stuck his pipe in his mouth, struck a light, lit his pipe, and handed the match to Tom.

Tom took it, lit up, and passed the match to me.

I hesitated for a moment, and then the temptation was too strong: I popped the expiring flame on the bowl of my pipe, and saw the soft blue smoke rising the next moment from three pipes.

I thought the old gentleman was going to have a fit; for he sat opposite to us, staring, with his mouth open. Then, as soon as he could get his breath, he began to storm and rage. He insisted upon our putting out our pipes; he abused us, he called us scoundrels, rascals—every objectionable term he could think of, short of swearing; and we sat still, and smoked calmly, grandly, voluminously, in the soft, cool silence of three Dutch burgomasters; for, in spite of the old gentleman's rage, we were happy.

At last we neared Wokingstoke, and the old gentleman gathered himself up, as we in concert prepared for action.

"I shall have an example made of your conduct if there's virtue in by-laws," cried our enemy. "Such disgraceful behaviour! Ah, it's of no use your putting away your pipes now. Let me pass, sir!"

This was to me; but as we ran to the platform, Dick's burly form was thrust out of the window, and the old gentleman could not get near it.

"Let me get to the window," he spluttered. "I insist upon speaking to the guard."

"All right, sir," said Tom, not budging an inch—"he's going to call him."

And at that moment Dick's voice was heard shouting—

"Here—guard, guard!"

We were late, and there was a bustle and hurry to get us on again; but at last the guard came running up.

"Now, sir, what is it?"

"Here, guard!" cried Dick, in an ill-used tone. "There's a person here will persist in smoking, and it's very annoying; he won't leave off. This isn't a smoking carriage, and he's been told—"

"Guard—I protest—I say, guard—I—I—I did not smoke—I—I—it was the smoking—the—the—guard, that person—I—"

"Oh, all right," cried the guard, cutting short the old gentleman's stuttering rage, for he was in such a passion that he could not explain himself clearly. "All right, out you come. Here, this way. I'll talk to you when we get up."

And before the old gentleman could recover from his astonishment, he was half hauled out, bundled into another carriage, Dick watching from our compartment; then there was a sharp whistle, the banging of doors, and away we went.

"Ah," said Dick, "now we can smoke in peace."

"But it was too bad," I said.

"I never accused him. I only said some one would smoke, and the guard jumped at conclusions. But I say, lads."

"What?" said Tom and I, in duet.

"The guard's stuffed him into a smoking carriage!"

Dick sank back, and smoked in peace. We followed suit, and we saw no more of our angry friend; but I must own that it was too bad.

Roses on the Brink.

BY WILLIAM SAWYER.

CHAPTER XXXII.—THERE ARE TWO SIDES TO A HEDGE.

"PROMISE me that you will help me to the utmost to crush this man?"

Ruby Framlingham had used those words to Arthur Pembrose on a night never to be forgotten by him, and he had responded, in the fulness and sincerity of his heart—

"I promise."

But now time, sliding on and on, seemed laughing that solemn compact to scorn. Edmund Harcourt was triumphant. He had slipped through the meshes of a great danger; had eluded conviction as in any way compromised by the scuttling of the insured vessel; was Eva's accepted suitor; and held a position that looked wholly unassailable.

The parties to that compact, which threatened his security so seriously, found themselves helpless. Convinced of Harcourt's guilt, they had tried every expedient to establish it, and had tried in vain. Every proof on which they had relied had crumbled away, and there appeared nothing for it but to leave the man in the hands of Providence, in the hope that it would

in its good time visit his misdeeds upon his guilty head.

Meanwhile, let it not be supposed that the compact was forgotten, or that its fulfilment was regarded with indifference. During many a quiet hour, the matter was discussed by Framlingham Brothers, Ruby, and Arthur, who gradually came to be a welcome visitor under his employer's roof, and to rank more highly as a personal friend. Of late, too, Knowles had often formed one of the party, and assisted at the conferences with an eagerness proportioned to the anxiety he felt for the fate of his daughter Eva, and the four had gone over the possibilities of the case until every one of them seemed exhausted.

Nothing had come of all this.

In addition, Ruby and Arthur had held secret interviews.

These originated, in the first place, through Framlingham's incredulity with respect to Harcourt, and were continued—well, for many reasons. Partly, let us say, from habit; partly, because those interviews were to Arthur Pembrose as glimpses of Paradise, so that he, at least, was not likely to bring them to a hasty close; while it must be admitted that Ruby was not averse to an occasional hour with one who sympathized with her so deeply, and whose respectful admiration trenched on the limits of worship. A woman is never unconscious of the admiration she inspires, and the sense of it is invariably grateful to her. And not unfrequently this feeling takes a warmer hue, and that almost imperceptibly.

One evening, on returning from his office, Arthur found that Ruby had called at the house in the Grove, Camberwell. She had declined to wait; but had stated that she would make a call in the neighbourhood and return.

Arthur instantly grew excited.

Had she brought news? Was there any revelation? What had prompted this unexpected visit at this unusual time?

While asking himself these questions he felt quite incapable of remaining in the house and waiting patiently for Ruby's coming. So summoning the attendant vestal and hastily informing her that Miss Framlingham was, in the event of her arriving first, to be respectfully entreated to await his return, he sallied forth in the vague hope of meeting her, and so by a lucky chance getting a few seconds more of her society than he might otherwise have enjoyed.

It was a delicious evening. A great red sun was going down behind the trees in their first flush of Spring green. The warm hues were upon everything; the windows of the houses gave back the reflection of the setting luminary in burnished gold; the cawing rooks were winging their flight home to the nests yet visible in the topmost forks of the elms; and the restless twittering and bickering of the smaller birds, as they settled down for the night in the branches of the trees, was a pleasant country sound to listen to. The air balmy, and with a sense of the breath of flowers and the pungency of leaves in it, was inexpressibly grateful; and to Arthur, with his heart beating high and face all aglow with happiness, it seemed as if sunset had never been so delightful before.

On leaving the house, he hesitated whether to turn toward the Green, in which the business-life of the

neighbourhood is concentrated, or to ascend the Grove, bordered on either side with elms and chestnuts, and noble trees of other kinds. The latter was the more inviting walk, and he decided that Ruby *must* have taken it. So in that direction he went.

Hurrying along—his mind quite preoccupied—he did not notice a trifling incident which at another time might fairly have taken his attention. He did not see that, as he ascended, a hack-brougham was coming down the Grove, and that, as he passed, a face was hastily thrust forth, as hastily withdrawn, and that immediately the occupant of the brougham pulled the check-string, and so caused the vehicle to stop.

Arthur went on, and had not gone very far before he was rewarded for his impetuosity. There in the distance—in the extreme distance—his heart told him Ruby was walking. She was so far off that he could not see her face; but he knew her for all that, and hurried forward to meet her.

Ruby was returning from her walk, and she brightened as she looked up and saw who was coming, and how eager the handsome face grew at the sight of her.

They met cordially, and by mutual consent turned back, so that they might walk while talking over matters in which they were interested.

"You bring me news?" Arthur inquired.

"Little that is of any moment," Ruby answered; "but I thought it right that we should meet, and that you should know what is passing. Besides, I hear that you have suffered alarm as to the state of my health to affect you. You heard that I was ill, and papa positively declares that you have been ailing in consequence. Now, as it would never do for both the arch conspirators to be ill at the same time, I determined to come and show myself, to convince you that there was no real cause for alarm. How do I look?"

She stopped, her face to the sun, which suffused it with a rosy glow, while it changed her bright hair to an aureole about her head.

"Charming!" cried Arthur, in a rapture of enthusiasm.

"I mean—how do I look in health?" she persisted.

"Superb. Indeed, you are health personified."

She smiled at the enthusiasm and obvious admiration of the man, and they went on again, side by side. They had by this time reached the top of the avenue, and were nearing a wicket, on the left of which a narrow country lane descends circuitously to the village of Peckham. By mutual consent they passed through the wicket, and began to descend the lane, which has high banks on one side of it, a hedge on the other, and is overshadowed with huge trees, rising at intervals. Beyond the hedge there lie open fields.

Descending this pathway, they resumed the subject more immediately interesting to them.

"You have, I think you told me," said Ruby, "had another interview with that strange being, Faroe? You sent for him through the boy Joe?"

"I did," returned Arthur, "feeling convinced that he must be of service to us. And he undoubtedly would be, could his statements receive confirmation. His story may be told in a few words. When Hilton Gathorne held his consulate in Turkey, Faroe's ship touched at the port, having on board it Faroe's sister, who was ill at the time, and was persuaded to land and

remain on shore until the ship made its return voyage. In the interval she recovered; and, being a woman of great attractions, Gathorne paid attentions to her, and before her brother's return she was his wife."

"His wife! He is married, then?"

"She certainly became his wife, and as certainly they quarrelled, grew disgusted, and would have separated, but that a terrible calamity befel the woman. As they were travelling inland, a house in which they slept caught fire: Gathorne escaped, the woman perished."

"Horrible!"

"Yes, if we are to take Faroe's version of it for truth. He swears that it was Gathorne's hand which fired the house, and that he had first taken the precaution to secure the rooms in which his wife—and if I recollect rightly, his child also—was sleeping, so that her escape was impossible."

"Poor Eva!" cried Ruby; "if she could only know of this!"

"She can and will," replied Arthur; "but it would be useless to inform her of it now. In her infatuation she would not credit it, and what proof have we of its truth?"

"There is Faroe's statement; it might be made on oath."

"Yes; but I fear that, unsubstantiated, it would have little weight. He is himself a man of no mark—a mere wanderer over the face of the earth. He has on his own confession been engaged by Gathorne in affairs of a criminal nature, and this story of his sister's murder may only have been invented in revenge for an outrage offered to himself; for it seems that in order to silence him he was inveigled on board a ship, which had been marked out for destruction, and very narrowly escaped with his life. That is why he is so deadly vengeful; but he is at the same time incapable of realizing his malicious desires."

"All this is very terrible," said Ruby; "let us change the subject. Let me tell you that which I had in my mind to tell when I called. It is a little secret, which papa is not likely to impart to you, unless he requires your aid; but I think you should know all, and trusting you implicitly, I cannot bear that you should be making efforts in the dark. You have heard of the Knowleses' losses?"

"Of course."

"Were you surprised?"

"I could scarcely help being surprised. I believed the Knowleses were a rich family."

"They are rich—very rich."

"How, then, does it happen that a few losses they are said to have sustained, the small sum involved in Captain Pagnell's death, and the failure of a few speculations should have brought them into these difficulties?"

"You forget," said Ruby, with an arch smile, "there is dear old Aunt Effra's elopement. It is impossible to say what money she may have carried off, is it not?"

"You are laughing," Arthur returned. "Your manner convinces me that you do not believe in this story. You have some information throwing a fresh light on the affair?"

"I have. But it is a secret."

"You can trust me, can you not?"

"As myself. In a word, then, Eva's father has sustained losses, but he is not a ruined man."

"And they are not so great as they are represented?"

"Oh, no."

"But why, why should he suffer these misrepresentations to pass from mouth to mouth if they are without foundation? He has some motive?"

"Yes. You cannot guess it?"

He reflected; but shook his head.

"It is difficult," he began, "to imagine—"

"I see, I see—you do not comprehend," Ruby interposed. "His object is simply to save his child from destruction."

"To save Eva?"

"Yes."

"But how is this to be effected?"

"In this way. You know darling Eva's infatuation for—for this man." She blurted out the word quickly, as if it were still impossible for her to refer to Harcourt without emotion. "You can imagine how hard it would be to persuade her of his unworthiness, or of the mercenary object with which he is seeking her hand? It would be easy for her father to insist on her turning her back upon him; but he is not at all sure that, with her romantic temperament, she would not disobey his most positive orders, and find a means of escaping to Harcourt and becoming his wife. Besides, his affection for her deters him from taking a step which would only end in her misery. He prefers to estrange her heart through her judgment; to let Harcourt himself open her eyes to his baseness, in the hope that she will despise in place of loving him. Therefore, he has suffered it to be believed that his temporary embarrassments are serious, so that Harcourt himself may take the alarm, and retire from a suit that can yield him no advantages."

Arthur Pembrose looked serious.

"I appreciate the father's generosity and sacrifice," he said; "but I am not at all sure of its success. But we shall see. Meanwhile, I am glad to know all this, and am more than grateful to you for having taken me into your confidence."

"It is, of course, quite between us," Ruby answered, "and will go no farther. But the very spirit of our compact demanded that I should not withhold this from you—though I may be to blame in thus giving you the confidence of others. It is possible."

"No!" said Arthur; "because you know that it is as safe in my keeping as in your own. I could not play the traitor even if I wished."

"I am certain of it," said Ruby, offering her hand in confirmation.

Arthur took the hand frankly as it was offered, and held it as they strolled. It was a little hand—a soft, white, yielding hand, which fell into his softly as a snow-flake, yet with a delicious warmth in it. And perhaps it was its lightness, perhaps its softness, perhaps the agreeable warmth which made Arthur reluctant to, or forget to, relinquish it. Perhaps all these qualities combined to bring about the ultimate result, which was that he did not relinquish it, but held it—quite unconsciously, of course—while they continued their conversation.

"You see how much Eva's real happiness depends on the success of what her father is attempting," Ruby presently continued, "though her heart may sustain a

shock from which it will not be easy for her to recover. Poor Eva!"

She sighed, and that sigh was sympathetically echoed by her companion.

"The wounds of the heart are those most hard to get over," he answered.

Ruby gazed at him with a half-serious, half-playful face.

"Have you suffered so much?" she asked, gaily.

He turned from her, but she saw that his colour went, that he seemed pained.

"Forgive me," she instantly added. "I would not trifle with your feelings for the world."

"You cannot," he answered, impetuously; "every word from your lips is music to my ears. What am I saying? Your pardon, I am sure; and pray let us retrace our steps. I have no right to compromise my employer's daughter thus."

In these words he did but give utterance to the conviction which had suddenly flashed across his mind. He had no right to hold Ruby in secret converse as he was now holding her. His feelings had betrayed him into that indiscretion, and he now saw it.

But Ruby did not reciprocate his feelings. She made light of his scruples.

"There is no occasion to hurry," she said. "My confidence in you, Mr. Pembrose, makes me feel as if I were conversing with an only brother. The business which brought us here is of sufficient moment to warrant us in outraging conventionalities. And I am sure no harm will come of it."

In that assurance they lingered and lingered, until the shadows began to close in, and the lane was growing quite dark. All that time they talked, sometimes of the matter in which they were both so deeply interested, sometimes of themselves; and when they returned to the Grove, and Arthur was privileged to see Ruby to the railway station on Denmark-hill, he experienced a sensation of happiness such as he had never experienced before. And when they parted on the platform, it seemed to him as if the dream of his life had begun to be realized, as if his foot was already on the first step of that celestial ladder which led to the heaven of Ruby's love.

Above all things, he remembered how long she had permitted him to grasp her hand.

Happy lover! It was well for his peace that he had not seen the dark figure which crouched behind the hedge of the lane, as they talked together, and suddenly emerged through a gap in it, and followed them back into the Grove, where a hack-brougham was all that time waiting.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—A WEDDING DAY.

THE little village of Neuchâtel, near Boulogne, quite a different place to the Neuchâtel in Switzerland whence we get the cheese of that name, was on a certain bright day, about this time, quite in a state of excitement. It is a small place lying among woods; the inhabitants for the most part are simple peasants; and events are so few, that even the smallest occurrence is calculated to excite the utmost sensation.

And the event of that morning was of a nature that was sure to awaken the utmost interest.

It was nothing less than a wedding.

Early that morning, a carriage had driven over from

Boulogne-sur-Mer, and had made direct for the principal inn of the village, which we will call the Golden Branch. At the door of this inn the occupants of the carriage—a lady and gentleman—had been received by the landlady, who had already, it was surmised, been apprised of their coming (at least, she had received a letter the day before, and none of her neighbours could tell what else it was about), and soon after they drove off straight to the little church, where the pastor awaited them, together with the verger, one or two other persons, and then a marriage was celebrated. Few saw it, for it was kept as quiet as possible, in accordance with the wish of both the parties, who had been for some time in communication with the pastor.

After the wedding, the carriage drove back to the Golden Branch, where a breakfast was prepared in the chief apartment, but only the bride and bridegroom sat down to it.

By this time the news had been noised abroad, and the Neuchâtel band had collected itself together and furnished itself up, and was ready on the green in front of the house to do honour to the occasion by such enlivening strains as might be forced out of a violin, a double bass, a flageolet, and a cracked post-horn.

While the music played the villagers assembled in force, and eagerly discussed the claims of the newly-married people. The few who had witnessed the ceremony rose into importance as having something to tell, while the rest became eager listeners.

"The bride—is she young?" asked an old woman of eighty, as she hobbled up, with her cap border on edge like a glory round her pippin-face.

There was a titter.

"Not so young as she has been," replied a pert girl, with great copper earrings dangling to her shoulders.

"And not beautiful, either?" persisted the inquisitive old lady.

"Well, I shall not be jealous of my darling Jules, not if she stays in the village a month."

"What? Old and plain? Is that so? And the man—what is he like?"

"Most like Fra Diavolo in the opera," returned the girl of the copper earrings.

A laugh confirmed the accuracy of the description.

"An Englishman?"

"He speaks English, but looks Italian. But he has been a fine man in his day, and long since the bride was a fine woman."

"And what, in the name of all the saints, brings Fra Diavolo to Neuchâtel to marry an old woman?"

"What, indeed!"

Everybody hereupon said "What, indeed!" as if the act were one which every one had a right to resent both personally and as calculated to compromise the village.

It will have been guessed from these comments that the happy pair who were the subject of them were the runaways, Marco, the artists' model, and Aunt Effra. They had indeed crossed the Channel; and were, quite unconscious of the comments passed upon them, seated at the table in the best room of the Golden Branch, partaking of their wedding breakfast.

It was not at all what such a repast would have been in England. The white cloth, on which the sunshine made prismatic reflections of the glasses, was dotted

here and there with a few simple luxuries. A melon occupied the place of honour; there was a plate of mixed fruits, a made dish of a savoury nature, a dish of macaroni, and—of all things—a dish of pancakes! But, then, Neuchâtel challenges the universe to compare with it in the production of this luxury. When we have mentioned the claret and the coffee, we have exhausted the wedding breakfast. It was simple, but, as Aunt Effra observed, "so much more sensible than the English style."

"For in England," she went on, warming with the theme, "we load the table with delicacies which nobody cares to eat—at least, in the morning. People having no appetites, owing to the emotional nature of the ceremony, we put before them things which would be trying to the most ravenous. But then the English are so excessively stupid!"

"True," replied Marco, "with their bride cake and—"
Aunt Effra interrupted.

"No, Marco, dear," she said, "I don't agree with you there. I should, I confess, have liked a wedding cake."

"Of which you wouldn't have eaten a square inch."

"Perhaps not; but one is not married every day of one's life, and a wedding is hardly a wedding without a cake!"

"Mere insular prejudice!" cried Marco, with a sneer. "What is the use of a thing that you can't eat, and everybody declares detestable?"

"Not everybody," returned Aunt Effra, who was a little stung at the tone in which the remark was made, and could fairly take her own part when put upon her mettle. "There are people who have the taste to like it."

"Just as there are savages who will eat earth, and smack their blubber lips after it," cried Marco.

"Really!" exclaimed his bride, firing up, "this is a little too much. However, it was not about eating the cake that I was thinking; but it is nice to send it to friends."

"Quite an exploded custom."

"That may be; but a very pretty one, I think."

"Pretty! What, giving people slabs of sticky indigestibility as souvenirs? Horrible! However, old women, old customs, I suppose."

"What!"

Aunt Effra rose from the table, knife in hand, as these dreadful words fell from his lips, as if she was then and there minded to seize her lord and master by his oily black hair, and sever his head from his shoulders. That mortal man should have dared to call her an old woman!

"There, sit down," said Marco, gruffly. "Don't let's begin our matrimonial wrangles to-day. Sit down, I say! If you want wedding cake, buy a hundredweight, if you like. You've plenty of money, and may as well squander it on that as on anything else."

"Thank you, sir!" said the bride, sarcastically, as she resumed her seat. "But I don't want your permission to do what I like with my own."

"Your own?" returned Marco. "Come, I like that. Your own what?"

"My own money, of course."

A slimy smile crept over the olive features of the Italian as he paused in the act of squeezing a rolled-up pancake into his mouth.

"Your money?" he said, as soon as he had emptied his mouth.

"Certainly. My money."

"Then you are not aware that the law gives the husband sole right and authority over whatever his wife possesses? Whatever she has inherited, whatever may be left her by legacy, whatever she earns, whatever is in her possession, no matter from what source, at the time of her marriage, becomes her husband's, and he only has the right to dispose of it."

"You seem to have studied the English laws of marriage pretty closely?" the lady asked, quite calmly.

"I have done so."

"And you think you have mastered them?"

"Think! I know it."

"Indeed! Then you will be aware that there are at least two exceptions to the general law, which, being framed by men, is of course in favour of husbands, and bears tyrannically on the weaker sex. The framers of the law have foreseen that there might be adventurers who would marry women for their money only, and then scatter it to the winds, and leave them to their fate."

"What do you mean?" asked Marco, changing colour.

He pushed away his plate, as if he saw instinctively that matters were becoming serious, and that he should eat no more pancakes.

"Allow me a word, and I will tell you," returned the bride. "The exceptions to the law are—first, where the wife has inheritable estate, the proceeds may be used by the husband, but the estate cannot be touched, and reverts to her heirs, not to his."

"Very considerate, I'm sure, of your English law," Marco sneered. "But the husband really does enjoy the fruits during the wife's lifetime?"

"Yes; but we needn't trouble ourselves about that provision, dear, because your wife does not stand affected by it."

"Oh!"

The word came accompanied by a sigh of relief.

"There is," the lady resumed, "a second exception to the general rule. A wife may have property secured to her own sole use by means of trustees, under a deed executed before her marriage, which deed the marriage does not affect."

"And you mean to say, Effra—"

"That my property is secured in that manner."

"And I have no control over it?"

"None."

"I cannot touch it?"

"Not a penny of it."

"The Devil!"

MR. HOWE, the famous animal painter, was a straightforward, bluff kind of man, laying himself open, by his *brusquerie*, to complaints for which he cared nothing. On one occasion Howe's bell rang, and, the servant being out, the artist answered the door himself. A gentleman there presented himself as a person of great dignity and importance, and, eyeing Mr. Howe with a mixture of inquiry and contempt, asked, "Are you Mr. Howe, the brute painter?" "Yes, sir," answered Howe, very blandly, and even bowing—"Yes, sir; I fancy you will be wanting your portrait taken—step in."

Wanderings in Half-a-Guinea.

BY MAJOR MONK-LAUSEN.

CHAPTER VII.—A MOUNT I ONCE HAD.

NOT liking to be beaten in the matter of getting one of the larger fish out of the lake, I determined to make a hook which would hold any one of them for myself. I was no novice at the blacksmith's craft, having been great friends with the Vulcan of the village in my boyhood. My relatives did not approve of my intimacy with this man, who was the greatest poacher in the parish; but, to tell the truth, that was his great merit in my eyes, and whenever I could over-persuade him to take me, I joined in his illicit expeditions. But his lawful trade also had an attraction for me, and I was often hammering away on his anvil when I ought to have been at my lessons.

Perhaps it was instinct, for the knowledge thus surreptitiously acquired has often stood me in good stead where Latin and Greek would have been of little account indeed; and now it enabled me to make a portentous fish-hook, strong enough to hang up a bullock, and with the upper part of the shank working on a socket, so that to break it by twisting would be impossible. To this I attached twenty yards of a strong line composed of deer sinews, which was made fast to a block of light wood as big as a man's head, and to this float again was secured the end of a coil of inch rope, wound round a measuring reel which was part of my equipment, though I never thought of using it for fishing purposes.

Any form of rod was impossible with such Brobdingnagian tackle; and I took Work, the lightest of my men, and the best paddler, in the canoe with me, principally that he might reel up the line as I hauled it in.

There was scant room for two in the frail craft, but it had been improved since my first trip in it: had been covered in fore and aft, so that it would not swamp if the centre part filled; and one could ride astride of it on emergency, with one's legs dangling in the water.

Work had made, and now took with him, a native shield, composed of light wicker-work and hide, with which he guaranteed to be able effectually to protect us both if we hooked another archer-fish.

Indeed, directly he had heard that I was going in for a big fish, and that he was chosen to accompany me, Work had shown extraordinary zeal and brightness. He wandered off alone along the shores of the lake, and returned with about half a dozen disgusting-looking water-snakes, from three to four feet long each, and of a peculiar gleaming whiteness on the belly.

"Much best bait for big fish, milor," explained Work. "He keep on ground, on rock most times, and big fish not get a chance. But snake very much good for big fish; so if big fish do see him where he can get at him, he not smell about, but—Klop!"

Klop signifies a dart of the head, the snapping of a very large mouth, and a sound of sudden swallowing, which I have thus indifferently endeavoured to express.

When the moon rose we started. It may seem strange to some stay-at-home reader that I should have chosen the night to try an experiment; he may think that it would have been more prudent, as well as more interesting, to attempt the capture of unknown

and powerful fishes with plenty of daylight to show clearly what was going on.

But he does not know what a tropical moon is. Why, I have often threaded a needle by its light, and on this particular evening you could see much farther and more distinctly than you often can at noon in England, Scotland, or Ireland. Indeed, I should have liked a little obscurity for the preliminary business of baiting the hook, which almost made me squeamish. We went out farther than I had done on the first occasion, and then Work asked—

"Me put snake on hook, milor?"

I assented with alacrity, and plunging his hand into the net alongside, he seized one of the hideous reptiles by the neck, and thrust the point of the hook into it just below the head.

It may seem a strange confession for such a destroyer of life as I have been from boyhood, but it is a fact that I have never been able to bait a fish-hook with a worm without considerable repugnance.

The infliction of pain is abhorrent to me, though of causing death I think little. All things have to die once, and can only do it once; but the pangs of agony endured by every creature are not a fixed quantity, and the number may be increased or diminished. Then pain is a real, death only an imaginary evil.

I know that many hold that worms cannot feel much; but if that is the case, which I sincerely hope it is, they are most accomplished actors.

The water-snake was also possessed of considerable histrionic powers, if Work was not hurting it; for it hissed and writhed, and twined its long body round the Poopooan's neck and arms in a horrible fashion, which did not affect the operator in the slightest degree; he simply unwound the length of snake he wanted, and went on threading with the composure of a philanthropic old Waltonian artistically impaling his brandling. I sincerely hope and trust, however, that it was only muscular action which caused the un-transfixed last foot of the bait's tail to lash about when at last it was dropped into the water.

Out of sight, out of mind; my attention was now solely directed to the float. In about ten minutes this scuttled along the top of the water for a dozen yards, and then disappeared.

I had a run, no doubt of that.

Wishing the bait to be gorged, I kept the line slack; but it was taken out so gently and so short a distance that I feared it was only a small fish that had taken the tempting morsel. Comparatively small I of course mean, for the mouth that could accommodate that snake and hook must be a pretty wide one.

At the end of ten minutes I gave a sharp jerk, to see if I had got a firm hold. Firm enough: if I had hooked a sunken ironclad, the resistance could not have been more unyielding. But all was still; there was no movement in answer to my challenge; but the line went slack again, as if I really had fouled some inanimate object. So I took a good steady haul, which woke the fish up, assuring him of the fact that there was something attached to his interior by which it was sought to induce him to move in a direction which he had not of his own free will determined to take. He resented this insolence, and fled from it in disgust.

I was hardly prepared for the velocity of his first rush. The line ran off the reel freely enough, but in

spite of this the canoe was dragged over the water as if it were towing behind a steamer. Directly there was a pause in his career, I commenced hauling in; but that speedily sent him off again, at a rate which presently carried all the line out; and then, my word, we did travel!

I held on to the rope, and Work to the reel, and if there had been any impediment to check the course of the boat, I believe we should have both gone overboard. I was confident that it was not an archer-fish, for the course taken was a straight one, while that of the other had been zigzag.

Immediately he stopped I began drawing in again, and reeled up several fathoms of line before he made a fresh start; but whether I hauled the canoe towards the fish, or the fish towards the canoe, I could not accurately determine. Fortunately he did not sulk, or we should never have mastered him; but as it was, he grew gradually weaker, and at last hurled himself into the air, to see if he could get free from this mysterious tether that way; and so we got a glimpse of what he was like.

In shape he resembled a porpoise more than any other fish I have ever seen, though he was much bigger, and his head bore a grotesque similarity to that of a pig. There was a decided snout, and two little eyes, and two fins that stuck up exactly like a pig's ears.

When the resistance grew weaker, we attempted to paddle towards the shore; for even if he had been quite dead and passive, we could not have got him into the canoe; but our efforts to tow him were quite unavailing, as it required very little exertion on his part to draw us in the opposite direction. So then his likeness to a pig made me think of the manner in which a real porker is got to market, by pulling him in an opposite direction.

Acting upon this idea, we went about, and drew him away from the point of the shore where our camp was; and, as I had anticipated, he dragged us in to it. When he stopped, I had only to haul at him, and away he went again, till at last he was not thirty yards from the bank, upon which all our party were assembled to watch our success.

Having arrived so close, we stole round and paddled in with a slack line; and jumping ashore with the end of it in my hand, I gave it a turn round a young palm tree that grew so close to the edge that its branches overhung the water, and with this leverage it was easy enough to hold the fish. Had he not been nearly exhausted, however, he would have smashed the tackle; and as it was, his struggles strained it to such an extent that I directed Work to climb up with the end of the line in his hand, while we held on to it lower down.

When the man was at the top of the slender, elastic stem, he passed the line over the fork of a branch there, and descended with the reel in his hand. Having secured that, we let go; and the next time the fish plunged and struggled, the tree bent and swayed, playing him like a rod.

But still, after all our ingenuity, I was forced to put a bullet through his head before we could secure him properly and get him ashore. The closer I examined this fish, the more I was struck by his resemblance to a pig; and this was still further confirmed when we

roasted a piece of his flesh, the flavour of which was exactly like that of a delicate suckling of the sty.

Persons whose consciences oblige them to keep the fasts ordained by the Church, and do not like the restriction, should form an association for the acclimatization of this fish. He fed our entire party for the whole of next day—ten persons, with extraordinary appetites, sharpened by the exquisite flavour of the food—so you may imagine that he was not under-sized.

Since we were now making so long a halt in one place, I had set the still to work; and a modest quantity of the delicious liqueur for which I possess the secret had accumulated to add a zest to our feast; after which a general desire was expressed that I should tell the party another story.

So, as I was desirous of combining a little instruction with amusement, I described the horse, an animal not known in the island, and told them his uses for draught and for riding, finishing up with an experience which I had in North America once, and propose to relate in other words here.

I have generally been fortunate in the temporary companions who have accompanied me in my expeditions; but on my first visit to the Far West, I happened to link my fortunes with a set of men of a very different stamp from the ordinary backwoodsmen and hunters. They were fellows, as I afterwards found out, who had been expelled from various settlements, and led a wandering life, not from choice, but because their felonious habits rendered their stay at any one place precarious.

Out on the wild prairies, they robbed me of stores, horses, and weapons, leaving me to die of hunger, or to suffer a still more painful fate in the hands of the wild Indians. I fell in, indeed, with one of these; but he was badly hurt, apparently dying, when I found him, having been wounded by a wanton shot fired by my late companions in their retreat.

After having decamped quietly with my property at night, while I slept, they came upon the poor Indian leading a lame horse, and laden with buffalo meat, which, on its being demanded, he gave up at once. Yet, as they rode off, one of the murderous scoundrels turned in his saddle and took a shot at the red man, probably to try one of my stolen rifles.

I tended the Indian to the best of my ability; and when the bleeding was stopped, and a few drops from my flask had been poured down his throat, he revived wonderfully; and his wound being a flesh one, and no bone broken, he was able, after a couple of hours' rest, to travel slowly on.

This was my first experience of the red man's power of endurance, and it was marvellous. Faint as he must have been from loss of blood, he kept up a steady tramp of full twenty hours without a halt, only slackening his pace when the trail he was following grew indistinct.

I confess that after twelve hours I was ready to drop with fatigue, and shame alone enabled me to go on.

At length we came up to the party my friend belonged to—a dozen men of the Sentaw tribe, who were on a hunting expedition. I certainly experienced a creepy sensation round the top of my head when I first saw them, but a few words of explanation from my companion assured my welcome; and the fact of

my having been robbed and deserted by their enemies improved our cordiality.

I knew nothing of their language at first, but I never met any men out of a deaf and dumb asylum so intelligent in signs; and we conversed by pantomime with the most surprising ease, though, as this method of holding communication was somewhat fatiguing after my long walk, I soon had enough of it; and making a hearty meal off the beef they put before me, I indulged in a long and sound sleep.

Afterwards, when I was awake and refreshed, they offered their services, and asked what I wanted—still after the fashion of Harlequin and Columbine; and we did really a great deal of effective play-acting. One of them made believe to rob me and run away, and the others captured and played at executing him; asking plainly whether I was pining after the scalps of my late companions. I intimated, in turn, that they were sure to be hung sooner or later, without my taking any trouble, and that my desire was for sport. What sport? Buffalo-hunting for choice.

As that was the business they had in hand at present, they could gratify me to my heart's content. But I had no gun. What of that? None of them had guns. Bows and arrows were their weapons; and with a bow and arrows I was at once provided, and a mark being set up, I proved myself no mean workman with such barbaric tools. Indeed, I had seldom found any difficulty in scoring three golds with five arrows, at eighty yards, at home. My next difficulty was about a horse.

The number of nags hobbled close by corresponded exactly with that of the party. There were no spare ones. Indeed, they were one short, for the wounded Indian's mount was still lame. But when I pointed out this drawback, the Sentaw I was signalling with uttered a guttural laugh, and waved his hand towards the east, looking in which direction I perceived a troop of wild horses feeding, on the horizon. Without further delay, they proceeded to attempt the capture of one or more of these, which was thus carried out.

All the Sentaws having mounted, four of them, with whom I kept, retired behind a low hill there was hard by, keeping just below the brow of it on the farther side; the remainder, taking a wide circuit, got to the other side of the troop of wild horses, and then charged down upon them, driving them at top speed towards our ambush.

When they were approaching, the four prepared their lassoes, and, rushing suddenly over the brow and down the side of the hillock, dashed straight at the troop. It seemed absurd to me to suppose that a horse with a man on his back should be able to overtake one that was not so weighted, even if the latter had "a race in him;" but such is the effect of judgment of pace and general jockeyship, that this was readily accomplished—at least, to the extent of getting within reach of the lasso; and presently a couple of astonished steeds were in the toils.

The *modus operandi* was this: the noose, thrown with consummate skill, encircled the neck of the animal, and was drawn tight. Then the hunter, diverging to one side, caused the noosed horse to change his leg, and at that moment a sharp jerk brought him down on his side. Before he could recover himself, a second and shorter lasso was round his fetlocks, and he was effectually hobbled.

This being accomplished he was allowed to rise, and a tough rein of deer sinew placed in his mouth, and attached securely to the lower jaw. When thus rudely bridled, the captor got to his head, breathed into his nostrils, and talked to him, whether using cabalistic words or not I do not know, but the soothing effect had every appearance of being magical.

When the horse gave tokens of sanity, the hobbles were removed; but on his making an undue use of his partial liberty, one of the fore-legs was hitched up in the Rarey fashion, and more nostril-blowing and talking resorted to.

After some half an hour of this treatment, a fine stallion was brought to me and given over for my use as a thoroughly broken hack and hunter.

Now, I flatter myself that I can ride a bit. I have held my own over the Leicestershire pastures; I have taken a good many first spears; I have sat an Australian brute till he bucked clean out of his girths; but I own that I did not quite relish this new experience.

Varied as the phases of my life have been, I have never gone about with a circus; and the bare-backed steed business, or Billy Button's Ride to York, is not in my line. It would not do, however, to show any surprise or repugnance; so I seized the lanyard which served as a rein, and vaulted on to the astonished animal's back.

I wonder what he thought had happened to him—something very curious and alarming evidently, by the way he conducted himself; for he kicked and plunged, and bolted for some distance; though, as there were hundreds of miles of undulating prairie land for him to gallop over, I did not mind that, being perfectly confident as to who would get tired of that little amusement first.

I am proud to say that he did not get rid of me, and by degrees he became comparatively tame and quiet; but I never felt thoroughly at home on his back, nor did I cease to feel the want of saddle and bridle. I accompanied the Sentaws in their hunting expeditions, indeed, but fairly confess that I could not emulate their feats. I was too much occupied with the management of my horse to do execution with a bow and arrow, but I enjoyed the attempt immensely. That was real sport, if you like.

Englishmen flatter themselves that they can break and train horses, and then that they can ride them. A little of my prairie experience on that expedition would take the conceit out of some of my Yorkshire and Tipperary friends considerably.

Why, a Sentaw Indian will catch a wild horse, and ride him without saddle or bridle, teaching him to answer the pressure of the leg so perfectly as to be able to guide him amongst a stampeding herd of buffalo, and check or accelerate his speed in a manner that keeps him alongside the destined victim—through which, by the by, I have more than once seen an arrow completely driven.

This feat of archery did not make much impression on my Poopooan audience, the natives of Half-a-Guinea being good archers themselves, though they prefer firearms when they can get them; but the description of the horses, and the use to which they were put, interested them extremely, and they expressed considerable envy of the good fortune of a people who had animals to carry them swiftly about, and save them the fatigue of walking and carrying burdens.

The Egotist's Note-book.

WE have all read till the blood curdles, the atrocities perpetrated in Bulgaria, because of a petty insurrection. What, then, is to be the fate of Serbia for its incomparably greater rebellion, if the Turk gets the upper hand? If ever volunteers were needed by the thousand to save one of the most beautiful European countries from being made a wilderness, it is now. I should like nothing better than to hear that five or ten thousand stout-hearted, clear-sighted British riflemen had gone to the Morava Valley, to send the fezzes scurrying like under a withering fire. It would be something to make a mark in this world's history. There may be legal difficulties in the way, and stumbling stones of policy; but in this case it would be well to study first the laws of humanity, and argue out the other afterwards, even as one might a question of trespass to put out a bad fire. I see that a volunteer body of two hundred cavalry has been organized at Belgrade, and goes to the front. May the much-invoked God of Battles strengthen their arms. But it should have been two thousand instead of two hundred. For my part I can conceive no greater feeling of delight than would be that of the man who, well mounted, and keen sabre in hand, charged knee to knee with his fellows, right down at whirlwind speed upon a body of the miscreants—ten—twenty—a hundred times their own number—who butchered the villagers in Bulgaria, unarmed men, women, and little children, with the surroundings so revolting that it is hard to believe them true.

The *Daily News* correspondent, who has been to the seat of the Bulgarian atrocities, writes as follows:—"It is only in the recital of the details accompanying the butchery that the mind can grasp and understand the fearful atrocity of the business. The Greek consul, who is not friendly to the Bulgarians, tells me of 12,000 wretched women and children marched into Tatar Bazardjik, nearly all of whom suffered the vilest outrages. He tells me of Bulgarian fathers who killed their wives and children in order to put them out of reach of the ferocity of the Bashi-Bazouks. The German officials tell me of the bodies of men cut up and flung to the dogs in villages near their own railway stations; of little children of both sexes maltreated and brutalized until they died; of a priest, whose wife and children were outraged and slaughtered before his eyes, and who was then put to death, after the most fearful torture, the details of which are too abominable to be re-told. I have the story of a young and beautiful girl, who, having found means to obtain the rudiments of an education, opened a school in her native village, and tried to do something for the education of the poor people about her, who is now lying in prison here, sick and broken-hearted, whose story is too sad for recital. The French consul tells me of Bashi-Bazouks relating to circles of admiring visitors how they cut off the heads of little children, and how the dismembered trunks would leap and roll about like those of chickens; and I shut my ears and say, 'This is enough; I do not want to hear any more; I do not care to investigate any further.' And this is Europe! These horrible crimes inflicted on a Christian people—a people of progress—by a set of barbarians, who,

saving in weapons of war, stay as they were three hundred years ago! England, politically, looks calmly on—England, who weeps so for the sufferings of her frogs that she passes a Vivisection Bill. Well, if England has no more humanity to spare, it is to be hoped that Europe has; and that Russia or Austria will take steps to drive a power out of Christian Europe whose presence there is not only marked with blood, but with horrors such as the vilest nations of old could not have excelled.

It would be a good piece of advice to give the public if they were told never to put their faith in the portraits published in our various illustrated serials. Recently we have lost one of our most genial authors, in the person of Mr. Walter Thornbury, a writer whose pen has very frequently embellished these pages. A more indefatigable and industrious writer we did not possess, and it was lamentable that so enterprising an artist should have been cut off in his prime. Short obituary notices were given in several papers, while the *Illustrated London News* and the *Graphic* supplemented theirs with portraits. Let any one compare the two, and see how utterly unlike they are. At the first glance it seems as if some great mistake must have been made, and representations given of different men. The *Graphic* portrait is, however, wonderfully accurate, and gives an excellent delineation of the well-known features of Mr. Thornbury, art critic, author, and journalist.

It is getting to be quite the fashion now to summon Board schoolmasters for caning their pupils. In the name of common sense, how is a teacher to effectually punish a badly brought up, obstinate boy, who utterly refuses to obey, and that in the face of the whole school? If the master does severely cane the imp, he is summoned; if he does not cane him, he loses caste with his boys, and his chances of keeping the school in a state of discipline are gone. The only advice I can give to messieurs the teachers is, hit a little harder.

Some one suggests that Trafalgar-square should be covered with green turf and plants. By all means let it be so, for at present it is a horrible arid waste, where children, innocent of soap and pocket handkerchiefs, dabble in the fountain basins, and prove themselves a general nuisance to the passers-by. Bless the children! I love them; but I like them clean, and without voices that are sadly shrill.

THE season has arrived when every one is thinking of turning from the sultriness of town life to the pleasures of a country tour. Ladies who take very little exercise when at home, with true British courage often undertake long and tedious journeys. It is of the highest importance, under such circumstances, that the clothing should in no way impede the proper circulation of the blood, but especially should the old but bad practice of gartering the leg be avoided. Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London, has provided the only means of remedying this in his New Patent Stocking Suspender, which he will send by post for 2d. extra. The prices are—Children's, 1s. 6d.; maids', 2s.; ladies', 3s. Our advice is to write at once for a pair.

My First Cigar.

I'M almost afraid to say how long it is ago, but it must be far on towards forty years, since I set aside money that, in an ordinary way, would have been devoted to the succulent toffee, the crisp hardbake, the acidulated lemon rock, or the ginger-bread parliament, to the purchase of my first cigar.

I'm afraid that my moral feelings must have been at a very low ebb just then, for I went to the shop quite prepared to say that it was for an uncle; but as I was not asked any questions by the dealer, who contented himself with wrapping the roll of leaf most carefully in paper, I was spared the untruth, spent threepence for the coarsely made, dark-hued Bengal cheroot, and smuggled it to the school, feeling all the while as if I had committed some awful crime for the sake of attaining an unknown joy, which was to be all beautiful ecstasy, delight, and dreamy, delicious delirium.

It was.

That half-holiday I went about with my jacket tightly buttoned up, stealing one hand inside every now and then to feel the end of the roll of paper, deep down in its seclusion, and make sure that it was still there. Not a schoolfellow approached me whom I did not mentally accuse of knowing of its existence, and harbouring designs to obtain it.

"Lend us your knife, Jones!" said Tompkins Primus, about three o'clock.

"Haven't got one," I said, shortly.

"Yes, you have," said Tompkins—"there, in your jacket pocket."

He made a snatch at it—a horrible snatch; but I eluded it by ducking down under his arm, and running to the other end of the playground. But it was an awful escape, and he nearly broke my brittle treasure right in half.

I think it must have been about six o'clock, when it was growing dusk, that I slipped away, got over the fence into Barnby's field, and down behind the big elms, where, after listening for a few minutes lest I should have been seen or heard, I pulled out the cheroot, and skinned it by taking off the paper.

Then I had to pause for a few moments, in doubt as to whether I ought to put the thin or the thick end into my mouth, deciding at last in favour of the thin, and popping it between my lips.

Ugh! But it was nasty—simply horrible to my fresh young palate.

But it was manly to smoke, and if it had been ten times as unsatisfactory of flavour, I should not have flinched; so I took out my box of matches, and struck several, blowing them out in turn as I tried to puff at the cigar, and feeling all the time as if it were the fifth of November, and I were about to start a squib.

I managed it, though, at last, and had the end well alight, the smoke drawing through freely, so that I obtained good mouthfuls, and worked away.

It was rather hot and strong, certainly, but—draw—puff—draw—puff—draw—puff—how old and manly I did feel! How I drew myself up, and leaned my shoulder against the fence, glorying in the pungent incense, which would make me choke a little now and then, and get into my nose in a rather awkward manner.

But then I was smoking, and the elation I felt was delightful.

I have since come to the conclusion that the elation was due to my natural excitement, consequent upon this glorious step out of bounds, moral and physical, and not from any great potency in the tobacco leaf.

The cigar kept well alight, and I was about one-third through it. It was very dark, and there was a sort of furious joy in the whole transaction. I felt like one of the old heroes of historical romance—a Sir Francis Drake—a Captain Kidd—a Paul Jones—a jolly free-booter; and, in imagination, clothed myself in buskins and tights, wore secret armour, and was ready to do any deed of daring.

I quailed once: had my name been called in the school-room, where the boys were learning to-morrow's lessons? Had I been missed or asked for by any of my schoolfellows? I hoped not. I could see their shadow on the blinds, as they went to and fro in the room, and I could see the light in the doctor's study, where I believed he smoked; and here was I smoking too—as good a man as he, and—

Ugh!

That was a curious shudder that passed through me, accompanied by a strange sensation, as if some one had suddenly lifted off the top of my skull, and poured in cold water. Ah, yes! there it all was, plain enough, mixing with and thinning down my brains, so that my head felt—felt—so light, so ethereal. Yes, it was water, certainly; but the water had suddenly vapoured, as in the experiments in our chemical lectures—not from heat, but from cold; and my head was now, as it were, filled with gas, and fast becoming a balloon, swelling out rapidly, and rising—rising.

Yes, there was no doubt about it, and I was slightly alarmed, but perfectly helpless. My feet had certainly left the ground, and I was going up—up—up, till I found that it was only in imagination; for though my heels had left the ground, it was only for a few seconds, and I was now lying flat, with my head resting on one of the gnarled roots of an elm tree—one of the half-dozen in the clump, which had evidently fallen into a high state of delight, and were waltzing round and round me in the most ludicrous fashion.

Then the fence over which I had clambered began its tricks—now rising, now falling, as if to crush me, until the palings nearly touched my nose, and then rising again, to bend over in the other direction.

The feeling of coolness that I had felt in my head now began to steal all down my back, and along my legs and arms, till it reached the extremities, when, like some heavy gas, it began to flow back again, inch by inch, to my spinal marrow, and then slowly along it to my head.

Next my heart began to flutter in a strange way, just as if it had been suddenly endowed with a pair of dove's wings, and was trying to fly out of my breast; and all the time the sensation of lightness went on increasing, until I seemed to be lifted up, and dropped down, again and again, till I took tightly hold of an old piece of root with one hand, wondering the while what was coming next.

And the cigar? Ah, that was sticking still between two of my fingers. It had gone out, and it didn't matter. I did not want to light it again; for I felt as if I had had enough, especially when at the end of a few

moments there came the sensation of having just swallowed a small powder in a teaspoonful of jam, and not liking it at all.

Ugh! That was the most dreadful part of the whole affair, worse even than the throb, throb, throb that came now in my head, just as if drops of molten lead were falling from one temple to the other, and then being forced back again.

I believe I groaned just then, and wondered whether I was going to die. I know I mentally declared that the cheroot must have been a horribly bad one, and I recalled the fact that I had often heard men say that some cigars were so bad that they could not smoke them, and this must have been one of the bad ones.

"I'll never buy another of that fellow," I said to myself.

And then I yawned frightfully, and uttered another groan.

At last a fresh thought entered my mind. This was not the effects of the cigar, but of indigestion—those hard, suety puddings which we had for dinner.

"Perhaps," I thought, "a few whiffs might do me good."

I sat up against the palings, and, with hands trembling, and a cold perspiration standing out all over my forehead, I felt for the match box, struck a light, and, placing the cigar end between my lips, drew and puffed till it was once more well alight.

How strong it tasted this time, and how hot and pungent seemed the smoke! It wouldn't go right, either, but seemed to treat my mouth like an ill-constructed chimney, and ran backwards down my throat, and made me choke; got up my nose, and made me sneeze; into my eyes till I was half blinded; and then—oh! how I shuddered, and felt pale all over. I must be going to die. I never felt so strange before—it was simply horrible; and I leaned back against the palings, the cigar dropped from between my fingers, and then I slid sidewise to the earth, and lay gasping for air, faint and helpless; for that was a very, very strong old cheroot, with a rankness in its nature that I should not even care to foster now.

How long I remained there I cannot tell—it must have been an hour before I felt sufficiently recovered to sit up; and nearly another before I climbed the fence, and stood swaying on the other side, feeling so far from like a freebooter, that I imagined I must have committed a murder to have been in such a state of horrible nervousness and dread. I remember casting away the match box, and sneaking in at the side door, and up to the dormitories, where I hastily crawled into bed, sinking soon after into a strange vacuity—half stupor, half sleep—from which I was awakened by a shrill voice at my side, crying out—

"Plee, sir, here's Jones, sir, in his bed."

Then the figure of an usher loomed near me, and a series of questions began, to all of which I responded with sighs, and the plea of a sick headache.

Then up came the housekeeper to feel my pulse and head, and declare me free from fever.

"He'll have to see the doctor in the morning," said the dame.

But I did not, for I got up next morning as well as any of my school chums; and I did not try another cigar that half.

Roses on the Brink.

BY WILLIAM SAWYER.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—"HAPPY BRIDEGROOM! HAPPY BRIDE!"

"OH, Marco, Marco!" cried Aunt Effra, when she had explicitly laid down the law in her own behalf, "do not be profane. You married me, not for money, but for love. You have told me so. You have sworn it!"

"Sworn it be hanged!" cried the irate bridegroom.

"And after all," the bride persisted, "it can make no real difference to you. While you behave to me as your love dictates, and as a husband should, you shall want for nothing which I can secure to you. If, indeed, a man of your family really needs any assistance from his wife."

Marco sprang to his feet.

"We have begun our wrangling early," he said, with bitterness, "and may as well go on. A pretty thing for a man to have his wife laying down the law to him over the wedding breakfast, and boldly confessing that she has swindled him!"

"Swindled, Marco! Oh, no, no!" cried his wife.

"But I say, 'Yes, yes,'" Marco persisted. "What is it short of a swindle for an old woman to hook a husband with the bait of her property, when all the while she knows it's tied up and settled on herself?"

"You are a wretch!" said the lady, promptly.

"May be so; but there's one consolation," Marco retorted—"the swindling is not all on one side."

"What!"

"Certainly not. Since we have come to revelations, I may as well make a clean breast of it. I am not the Exile of noble birth you have taken me for. I have no family—no money—no resources."

"What are you, then?"

"A dealer in old curiosities and smuggled goods—an artist's model—an adventurer ready to turn a penny on anything in the world. That is what I am; and now what, think you, are you?"

"A miserable woman," cried Effra, drawing forth her pocket handkerchief.

"Nonsense! A conceited old fool."

With this he walked toward the window, and with a wave of his hand tried to stop the horrible discord of the Neuchâtel band. Then he took an old meerschaum from his pocket, filled it, and began to smoke.

The lady rose indignant.

"How dare you smoke in your wife's presence?" she demanded, rapping her bony knuckles on the table cloth.

He made no reply, and took no more notice than if she had not spoken. Mortified and indignant, she sat down and wept copiously. The wedding repast stood unfinished, the coffee grew curdled and the pancakes cold, and the band played on in strange mockery of the miserable spectacle the room presented.

For a quarter of an hour nothing passed between the newly-wedded pair.

It was Aunt Effra who broke silence.

"Oh, Marco!" she burst out, "speak to me. You must love me a little—a very little?"

He looked up as from a reverie.

"Ah, you are still thinking of me—I know you are," she exclaimed.

"Yes," he replied, calmly, "I was thinking of you, and thinking precious deeply."

"Flattered, I'm sure," was the tart rejoinder.

"I was thinking," Marco persisted, "of three ways by which I could extricate myself from the consequences of the rash step into which I've been betrayed. I might devote myself to all your caprices, and dangle attendance on you to the end of my days, to be rewarded when and how you thought fit; just as your lap-dog, Fido, gets a cake by way of approval when he has gone through his tricks."

"In a word, you might be a good husband to me, and safely rely on my gratitude," Effra replied.

"Exactly. But that, I'm afraid, isn't altogether to my taste. A shorter way would be to pitch my bride overboard on our return voyage, and so rid myself of all further trouble."

Aunt Effra was aghast. She had never listened to anything so horrible, and she said so.

"Don't be afraid," retorted Marco, quite coolly. "There might be danger in that, and I don't like danger. There is a third resource which will answer every purpose. You can pension me off, give out that the marriage has never taken place—and it can't matter to you whether it has or not, for you will never be likely to be asked in marriage again—and simply announce to your friends that the Exile turned out less eligible than you expected, and you have simply altered your mind, and mean to come home again as if nothing had happened."

For a few moments the bride sat with compressed lips, a scowl on her brow, and one foot tapping impatiently on the polished floor.

Then she spoke, in a voice so hard and cold that it scarcely seemed her own.

"Since you have been good enough to take me into your confidence," she said, "I am willing to take you into mine. Until this moment, it never occurred to me that the ceremony through which we have passed to-day may be objected to on the ground of illegality. I believe it to be so. I am a Protestant, you are a Catholic; and in my country, excessively stupid as it is in other respects, there is a wholesome provision that such marriages do not hold good unless they are repeated. I must be married by a Protestant clergyman before I can legally become your wife. This occurs to me, now that the point is forced on my attention as being the law, and therefore I shall not pension you off; I shall not compensate you for the trouble and expense you have taken, or the disappointment you may feel; I shall simply return to my own country, and leave you to your legal remedy."

These brave words, spoken bravely, produced a startling effect on Marco. A thundercloud darkened his olive face to within a shade of black. He stood glaring at his bride in the impotence of defeated villainy.

The first intensity of the effect had somewhat died away, when he said—

"Take care, madam; you may drive me to my second alternative."

"There is no fear of that," cried Aunt Effra; "we shall not return by the same ship. I shall leave this house alone."

"Never!" cried Marco.

"Dare to oppose me," she retorted, "and I call for assistance."

"And that cry will be your last."

He snatched up a dinner knife as he spoke, and grasped the handle as he would have done the hilt of a dagger, glaring maliciously the while.

There was a moment's pause.

And in that moment the Neuchâtel band struck up afresh and with renewed vigour, this time adding to its instrumental efforts a vocal chant in honour of the wedding pair, of which the burden was singularly appropriate to the situation—

"Happy bridegroom! Happy bride!

Joy and rapture both betide.

Peace and pleasure

Without measure—

Happy bridegroom! Happy bride!"

CHAPTER XXXV.—A STARTLING SURPRISE.

FOR obvious reasons, Edgar Knowles entertained little company now. It would have been imprudent in a man whose affairs were town talk, while the absence of his sister Effra would have been certain to lead to unpleasant inquiries.

It would perhaps have been as well had the family quitted town; but Knowles had, no doubt, his object in remaining. Business matters obliged him to see business men. More particularly, he had occasion for frequent interviews with Peckford, his lawyer, who had the management of all his affairs, and who came to the Park almost daily.

This state of things was not favourable to Edmund Harcourt's making much way with Eva. But her father had promised that he would throw no obstacles in the way of their meeting, and he was as good as his word.

"We will have a little dinner, Eva, on Thursday," he one morning said—"quite quiet, you know—just Harcourt, Peckford, and ourselves. It will relieve the tedium of these trying times."

Had Eva dared, she would have suggested that the dinner would have been quite as nice without Peckford. She stood in awe of that bird-like little man, and was not at all sure that Harcourt's introduction to him was likely to conduce to his peace of mind or her happiness.

However, it would have been useless to raise objections, and she issued the invitations.

Both were accepted.

The dinner fell on a day of peculiar trial. A fresh disaster had befallen Knowles. The papers of that morning were full of descriptions of a cyclone which had been destructive to property in the West Indies, and it had been expressly mentioned that Edgar Homersham Knowles had property in the district, and was a loser.

This formed the topic of conversation between the host and Peckford, as they sat by the fire in the drawing-room close upon dinner-time, waiting till Eva should come down, and the remaining guest should arrive.

"Will he come?" Knowles wondered.

"Undoubtedly," said the lawyer.

"You think he may not have seen this morning's papers, or may still be of opinion that our affairs are not so critical as the public suppose?"

"He is sure to have seen the papers," was Peckford's answer, "and he may or may not entertain serious doubts as to your position. But he is quite sure to seize this opportunity of coming here, and judging for himself as to how things are going on."

The accuracy of the lawyer's view was almost immediately confirmed.

Edmund Harcourt was announced.

He entered full of spirit and buoyancy, his face radiant, his evening attire perfection, and advancing to his host, greeted him most warmly. He had not so cordial a greeting for Peckford, who brought his sharp eyes to bear upon him with peculiar severity; but then they were strangers. Soon after, Eva floated into the room, in a charming toilette of white and azure, and his attentions were most marked and considerate. Whatever might have lurked in his heart in the way of mistrust or suspicion, he allowed nothing whatever to appear on the surface. He had never appeared more gay, more buoyant, or, apparently, more happy.

His buoyancy was so great that he felt bound to apologize for it, and in the most natural way, when they had gone down to dinner, remarked that he must not be thought unfeeling, because his spirits were high. He had seen the news in that morning's paper, and ought to have expressed his regret at the further losses Mr. Knowles had possibly sustained.

"There will be time for condolence when the extent of those losses is ascertained," Peckford interposed; "it is not necessary to destroy an agreeable meeting by gloomy forebodings, but my client is naturally very anxious."

"Naturally," Harcourt assented.

"The consequences, taken in conjunction with previous losses, may be serious to him."

"So I have understood; but let us hope that he may be able to weather the storm. But that, of course."

"Of course? You are sanguine," Peckford returned, significantly. "However, it is not worth while to look on the dark side of things too soon."

Eva turned on the lawyer with beaming face.

"It is so good of you," she said, "to inspire hope and confidence. I am sure all will be well."

The lawyer and his client exchanged glances: the turn the conversation was taking was far from being agreeable to them. Harcourt, apparently intent on his plate, saw the look exchanged, and a quiet smile played about the corners of his mouth.

The dinner went on, and, as it did so, Harcourt's exuberant spirits soon restored the right feeling. What had come to this man? What was in his secret heart that excited him, as if he had found a treasure, and could not hide the possession of it from those about him, seeing that the secret peeped out of his eyes, and gave a mellifluous spring to his voice?

Once again the lighter tone was interrupted by an allusion to a distressing topic. It was almost impossible that there could fail to be some passing allusion to Aunt Effra's absence. She was the governing spirit of the Park. Having come there immediately after Knowles's wife's death, and while his daughter was yet a child, she had taken the management of the establishment, was familiar with all the guests, and her flight had left a vacancy which Eva had in vain sought

to fill up. The name of the missing lady was naturally mentioned.

"That reminds me," said Harcourt, "that I had a message from my friend, Randolph Agnew. He, as you know, made all possible inquiries as to the whereabouts of the man Marco. He informed you as to his want of success up to a certain time, and regrets that he has not been more fortunate, since Marco has evidently quitted London."

"I am afraid my foolish sister has made a grave mistake," said Knowles; "my own endeavours to find what has become of her have all failed."

"What is most to be feared," said Peckford, "is a marriage that will alike impoverish and disgrace her family."

He gave a sharp glance at Harcourt to see the effect of his words upon the young man; but detected nothing—he had already turned to Eva, and was closely engaged in conversation with the blushing girl.

The dinner passed off well; for, though Knowles was reserved and Peckford sarcastic, Harcourt was gay and brilliant, and Eva radiant with delight. When, at the close of the repast, Eva retired, the one main object of the meeting became pretty obvious. With his wine before him, the lawyer began to put what he would have called leading questions to the young man as to his family, his early life, and his prospects. But it was not the first time that he had been questioned on those points, and, perceiving the drift of the interrogations, he parried them with wonderful adroitness. He was able to speak of his family, for it was a good one; but he was also able to tell that it had dwindled away to nothing, and that he had, in consequence of family difficulties, spent his early years abroad—as, indeed, he had much of his later life.

"Ah, you had a consular appointment, I believe?" the lawyer asked, abruptly.

"I? Oh, no—I was not so fortunate."

He answered calmly; he did not change colour.

"But I have heard—" the other was proceeding, not prepared for this steady denial.

"My dear sir," cried Harcourt, "you will allow me to be the best authority on this point. Had I enjoyed the advantage you allude to, I must surely have known it."

"Well, yes; but—"

"You are not satisfied? And yet you have got what I think you lawyers call 'primary' evidence. You ought surely to prefer that to mere hearsay."

But the lawyer was not to be beaten.

"At the risk of making myself disagreeable," he said, "I shall venture one remark. Most of us as young men had our little slips—made our mistakes—compromised ourselves in some way or other, and find it desirable to forget the follies and blunders of our youth, in the hope that others may have equally short memories. Now, suppose you, as a young man, had taken a false step—had done what thousands of other young men have done, and had found the necessity of, let us say, adopting another name—ignoring the fact of your former career—or having recourse to other similar expedients? Oh, pardon me, I am only putting a case."

He was compelled to stop, for Harcourt's eyes were flashing, his cheeks burning, and he was in the act of rising from the table.

"Excuse me, Mr. Peckford," he said, "but I fail to

see the justification for the course you are pursuing. I have given you a plain answer to a plain question—which, by the way, you had no right to ask—and I must decline to listen to hypothetical cases, put in such a manner that they seem to reflect upon my conduct and veracity."

"Very good," said the lawyer, not at all perturbed; "but, as something more than my friend's family adviser, I thought this a favourable opportunity of satisfying myself on one or two points respecting yourself, seeing that you also are here in a double capacity."

The host rose.

"Suppose we adjourn to the drawing-room," he said.

"One moment," returned Harcourt; "there is something which I ought to have said before, but this meeting seems the fittest opportunity for saying it. I believe, sir, that I have the happiness of being loved by your daughter. That love is, I assure you, fully reciprocated. Eva is the idol of my life; and I ask on her behalf, and on my own, that I may have your sanction in paying my addresses to her."

Mr. Peckford interrupted.

"In the present crisis of Mr. Knowles's affairs—" he began.

"You will excuse me," cried Harcourt; "but in a matter affecting Eva's happiness, surely her father is best capable of coming to a decision. You are his business man; in this matter something more than business is involved."

"Mr. Harcourt is right," said Knowles; "though it is of course necessary that he should satisfy your scruples as to his position, and so forth. Eva's happiness is the paramount consideration, and that being so, suppose you give me a week, Mr. Harcourt, to think the matter over?"

"But in the meantime, my position—"

"Is simply that of our guest."

He turned on his heel, glad to get rid of a subject which was inexpressibly painful to him, and was about to quit the room, when the half-open door was pushed wide, and Eva entered, her face flushed with excitement, her hair in a falling tangle, and her dress flying about her, just as she had risen from the sofa in the drawing-room, and rushed downstairs.

"Oh, papa!" she cried—"a letter from aunty."

It was a foreign letter, with the French postmark on it.

Edgar Knowles tore it open, and read the few words contained—

"DEAR EDGAR—I have been a fool; but am wise enough to know it.

"I return to England at once.

"Whatever you do, save Eva from the designs of Edmund Harcourt. I was right. He is a villain.—Yours affectionately—"

"EFFRA KNOWLES."

The sensation the reading of this note caused may be imagined. The three men looked one another in the face, while Eva drew back in horrified amazement.

It was Harcourt who broke silence. He forced a laugh.

"Well!" he exclaimed, "I knew that Aunt Effra regarded me with anything but affection; but I did not

think her capable of thus treacherously maligning me."

"My sister is a woman of the world," Knowles replied; "but, for all that, a woman of sound, strict principles. She is incapable of writing thus, unless she believed what she wrote. She has, no doubt, learned something through the man Marco—"

"A snake in the grass!"

"What! You know him?"

"I know enough of him to be certain that he would do me an ill turn if he could."

Mr. Peckford regarded him with a suspicious look.

"At all events," he said, "I think you will see that there is more reason than ever that Mr. Knowles should have a week to consider your proposal for his daughter's hand."

Harcourt bowed stiffly to both gentlemen.

"Under the circumstances," he said, "it would be better that I took my leave. Good evening, Miss Knowles."

He offered Eva his hand.

"Oh, Edmund," she exclaimed, "there must be some mistake. They are all against you, every one of them; but I—I will trust you to the last."

A grateful look and a pressure of the hand rewarded her, and Harcourt took his leave.

On doing so, he made at once for a favourite resort of his, the Café de l'Europe, in the Haymarket. In one of the boxes of the public room he found Randolph Agnew, smoking a cigar, and quietly awaiting him. A single glance at Harcourt's face was enough to convince the younger man that something was wrong, and he at once changed colour with sympathetic apprehension.

"You look scared, man!" he exclaimed—"my information was incorrect?"

"No, no—right enough," was the impatient answer.

"What! what I heard as I crouched behind the hedge while Pembrose and Ruby were talking of the state of Knowles's affairs was correct? and yet you look as if—well, I don't know how you look."

Harcourt took a seat by his side.

"I have little doubt," he said, "that Knowles is trying to impose on me by assuming that his losses are greater than they are: he is a wealthy man still; but, in a word, Marco has betrayed us."

"Marco!"

The tone in which he uttered the word showed how much cause both had to fear treachery on the part of the Italian, and it was with a grave face that the young man listened to the recital of what had just happened.

"What is to be done?" he then asked.

"How can I tell, until we know the extent of the wretch's treachery?" was Harcourt's impatient answer.

"If nothing can be done in your affair," said Randolph Agnew, "I want your assistance in mine. I want your advice first, and probably your active aid afterwards. My difficulties will at least divert you from the thought of your own."

Harcourt did not appear to take this generous view of the matter, for he yawned horribly, and sat with his head leaning back against the wall, in a listless fashion, as his friend stated in an undertone the nature of the enterprise he wanted him to engage in.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—CAGE LIFE.

LIFE in a cage may be very enjoyable to birds—at least, many benevolent people must think so, or they would not keep their songsters in a state of misery for their own selfish gratification; but it is apt to be intolerable to human beings.

Zerina, for one, found it so.

The second day of her incarceration in the house which the clumsy builders had so reprehensibly neglected to give a street door to, was pretty much like the first evening. She was aroused out of a troubled dream by the rough woman (who subsequently informed her that she had been a warder in a lunatic asylum, and who seemed admirably fitted for the post), and having dressed, descended to the room in which she had supped, where breakfast was laid. There was no lack of anything at this meal, nor at any subsequent repast. It was clear that the colonel designed that Zerina should have everything she wished for except her liberty; but as the latter happened to be the only thing for which she wished, why matters fell out crossly—as they but too often will.

In the drawing-room there was a pianoforte, there were books, there were chess and draughts, and portfolios of prints, and materials for water-colour drawing, for wool-work, and paper-flower making. Had Zerina been of a contented disposition, she might have amused herself all the life-long day; but being petulant and restless, she only stamped up and down the room, and cried till her eyes were dry of tears.

Every now and then the woman—Becky she called herself—came in to see how my lady got on, and to read her a little moral lesson.

"There! I haven't patience with ye," she would exclaim, with accompanying action expressive of extreme disgust; "why, a lady born and bred couldn't make more fuss, and you aint *that*, for all yer fine airs."

Or again:

"It's downright wicked, that's what it is, turnin' up yer nose at good wittles, and grumblin' over comforts as would make many a poor crecher jump up and hang by nothin' for pure joy."

But Zerina was neither to be taunted into contentment, nor persuaded into emulating the unfortunate beings who were ready to express their joyous emotions in the singular manner described. She would only weep and moan, with a burning sense of indignation against the colonel as the author of her misery, and an exaggerated estimate of the pleasures from which she had been snatched.

Weeping thus, and moaning thus, rocking to and fro also in a disconsolate manner, she sat over the fire as evening began to close in, when, happening to look up, she saw a face in the glass. It was the face of the colonel, who had entered stealthily, and was creeping towards her with noiseless steps.

At the moment she detected his approach he was almost near enough to touch her, and was already in the act of raising his arms, as if to throw them about her neck, and clasp her head to his bosom, when she started up, and confronted him, with a face crimson with indignation, and with fiercely luminous eyes.

"Dare to come near me!" she shrieked, at the same moment snatching from the mantelpiece a feather fan,

as if about to brain the colonel with that deadly weapon.

Naturally, the colonel smiled.

"Take care, child," he exclaimed. "Take care! If you should do me an injury!"

"I could kill you," she retorted, fiercely.

"No, no, no!" was his pleasant reply, "you couldn't do that; and if you could, you wouldn't."

"But I would."

She was fiercely determined, and clenched her little white teeth, and looked so desperate, that Duplex ought to have recoiled in alarm. But he did not. He only admired her all the more. This sort of thing gave zest to life. People in society are, as a rule, so tame, that it was delicious to meet with a little genuine spirit.

"Now, Zerina, dear, you are a little goose," he said—not by way of soothing her, but, if possible, to rouse her to yet fiercer resentment—"and you don't mean what you say. Not a word of it. You love me too well. Oh, don't fly out, and pretend that you don't, because we came to an understanding on that point long ago. I was the kind, good, dear papa, you know, and you were to be my pet, my darling, my duck-o'-diamonds; and we were never to quarrel, but to live happy all the rest of our days, like the good people in the story-books."

"It is false!" cried Zerina. "I always hated you."

"Hated me—me, your dear colonel?"

"I did."

"And after all I have done for you! After my warning you against those dreadful Dormer-Paget—a class of people absolutely fatal to know—correcting all their vulgarities, and trying to counteract the consequences of all their dreadful habits and excesses Oh, Zerina, this is unkind—this is ungrateful!"

"You had no right to interfere," returned the girl petulantly; "and you've no right to expect me to be grateful for what I never asked you to do for me—what you had better never have done."

The colonel gazed at the girl, with a smile on his smooth features, as if amused at the seriousness with which his words were received. He was only joking, but Zerina was in no mood for anything short of downright earnestness. Enjoying the conflict between the sensations, as he was accustomed to enjoy everything which relieved the satiety of his jaded life, he ventured to push the jest a little farther.

"But consider, child," he said, "what might have happened had I not taken the trouble to interfere. Now Zerina might have degenerated to the point of eating peas with her knife! She might have drunk those fiery ports and sherries of the Dormer-Paget cell until she had a red nose. Fancy a red-nosed Zerina! But you can't fancy it; nobody ought to be called up to imagine of anything so dreadful."

The girl waved the subject away with a gesture of impatience.

"You insult me," she said; "you make me hate you worse than ever I did. Why are you thus cruel to me? Why am I brought here, shut up like a prisoner, lonely and miserable, and in terror? You have so dreadful motive? Let me know the worst. I can't do that better than this horrible jesting."

The earnestness of her speech was intensified by tears which streamed over her cheeks as she spoke—

if the fountains of grief had opened anew; but the colonel was not in the least moved. He simply shifted his position, leaning his back against the mantelpiece, the tails of a crimson dressing gown he wore gathered up under both arms, and a smile playing over his dissipated features.

"I have already explained to you the sentiments by which I am actuated," he said. "I have told you in unmistakable terms that I love you."

"It is false," she broke in.

"Indeed? And why should it be so? Am I incapable of admiring the young, the beautiful, the emotional, do you suppose? Is there nothing in my heart which appreciates the charm of innocence?"

"Appreciates only to destroy it," she retorted.

"Now, now, this is hard," he returned, not at all perturbed—such a man was incapable of being stung by anything Zerina could say—"you would not say this if Lubin were expressing his admiration of you. Happy Lubin! with his pink cheeks, and the yellow locks, and mouth like a jam tart. You would believe every word that fell from his currant—or shall we say raspberry?—lips. But because I am a man of the world, a man of a ripe age, who have cultivated my affections, as I have my taste, on the best models, and according to the most approved rules of art, you flout at me when I go into raptures, and would box my ears if I knelt and declared myself your slave."

"Because you are a wicked, abandoned, false-swearing man," she returned. "But take care. This outrage will be avenged. My father, Marco, will come to know of it, and then you will have cause to tremble. His Italian blood, once roused, changes him into a demon, and he knows neither pity nor remorse."

The Man in the Open Air.

WE are told that about now, limes and elms are shedding their leaves; but long since, indeed at the beginning of July, the trees of most kinds, which usually do not at that season admit of a peep of Heaven through their dense foliage, were so thin as to exhibit the entire anatomy of their limbs and branches; indeed, the intense heat had dried up the sap and had shown another evidence of extremes meeting, by anticipating all the effects of the severest frost. But if the trees that have their sources deep in wells of moisture suffered, what did, or rather do, men in the open air? Even clad from head to foot in white or grey, and an Indian pith covering for the brain, the pan of that necessary weight upon our shoulders seethed in a way, during the late sultry weather, to indicate that nature prepared her sunstrokes by culinary operations, which, as she is ever simple and economical in her works, differed little or nothing from the tossing up of an omelette, or the turning over of a sweetbread in boiling fat.

Throwing off one's flesh and sitting in one's bones in such weather might answer in a theatre of demonstrative anatomy, amongst men who are accustomed to such undress subjects, and can help a fellow to resume such toggery; but we question whether the police—although a secluded spot by the side of some distant river were selected to "throw aside integuments and all"—would not rattle our bones over the stones, and run our osseous-

ness into the nearest watch-house, it may be, leaving to the ravens or the water-rats our favourite biceps or deltoid.

Amongst drinks, there are many recommended for quenching the thirst and giving ample supply to perspiration, which if checked is highly injurious to the system. Cold spring water is bad, and so are the general descriptions of beer. Cider is equally so, if not charged with ginger. Cold tea is not always obtainable, but that is excellent and refreshing. Seltzer and brandy and the like concoctions are expensive; and if sugar is present in any of them, they create what they are intended to allay. Cold lemonade home-made is salutary, but a great lot of it is necessary for the effect. Oatmeal and water is singularly efficacious, and if a small package of meal were carried in the wallet or knapsack, any cottager would provide you with a basin or jug to mix it in. Of course, it should be drunk when cold; and, to reduce it to the necessary temperature, a very little boiling water is, in the first place, necessary to scald the meal; and then cold water could be added *ad lib.*, until the beverage—for it really is one under the circumstances—is sufficiently thin for its purpose. This is the drink provided for the men working at iron foundries and gasworks, to which they have taken with long-established will and thankfulness.

But if the Man in the Open Air cannot do without his beer, that of Ind Coope is assuredly the best for allaying thirst, and is said by many medical men to further possess the singular quality of not only not inducing gout, like most other beers, but positively of either checking the advance of rheumatism or curing it.

We observed that, during the last few days of heat, that almost unendurable torment, the house-fly, had nearly disappeared from our apartments: it may be that their intense thirst had driven them to marshy places, or in the neighbourhood of rivers and other waters. That the domestic fly does migrate in countless numbers is now well known, but the cause of their flights to remoter parts has not been even guessed at, which may be the more excuse for this surmise.

We noticed, while up the Thames, that most pleasure boats had sported an awning, under which the occupiers could occasionally creep and get a cooler; if it were sprinkled with water occasionally, the effect would be still more pleasant. Angling for anything but gudgeon was out of the question, excepting early and late.

Worms were also scarce, this reptile having retired down into the moister bowels of the earth to avoid becoming like a dried piece of stick, should the watchful birds allow the time for that mummyizing and desiccating process.

Good news mostly from the moors, but the anticipation of partridge shooting is not in places very favourable.

OCEAN DEPTHS.—The mean depth of the ocean has been estimated at 21,000 feet, or about four English miles, and the extreme depth at 50,000 feet, or more than nine miles. The Atlantic, averaging from three to five miles, is deeper than the Pacific, although 40,000 feet have been reached by soundings in the latter; the Indian and Southern Oceans are from four to six miles; the Antarctic becomes shallower towards the Pole; the Arctic is generally supposed to be the shallowest of the oceans. The minor seas exhibit much diversity of depth.

The Natural Tunnel of Langon.

I HAD one morning taken the six o'clock train from Bordeaux, and was whirling away towards Langon, when at Barsac station, the tenth on my route, the fancy seized me to get out and make the rest of the way afoot. A Bordeaux neighbour, who was travelling in the same compartment, offered to see to my baggage, and have it sent to the Cheval Blanc Hotel, where I intended to put up.

The locomotive would have taken me to Langon in twenty-five minutes. I calculated that I should accomplish it in three hours, and expected to reach my destination at noon. So I did, but it was noon of the following day. But I did not long follow the highway that ran parallel to the railroad.

I had not counted on the heat, which even at that early hour became intense, and I sighed as I thought of my umbrella. But, plucking up courage, I looked about me, and saw beyond the vineyards a bit of woodland that suggested shade and coolness.

It was a good walk to reach it, but there was no shelter nearer—the scattered houses along my way being all closed.

On reaching it I paused, to cool off gradually, and then took my seat at the foot of an oak.

Without knowing it, I was over the natural bridge—or tunnel, rather—near Langon.

The woods covered two hills separated by a deep natural cut, in which a road wound, evidently well worn by use; then a mass of rock joined the two hills above, covered at the top by earth enough to continue the wood by bearing sturdy trees; while the road passed beneath the rocky bridge through a natural tunnel some hundred paces in length.

Unconscious of this, I sat by my old oak, fast yielding to the sleepy sensation produced by heat and exercise, when I was aroused by voices that seemed to come from under me.

Leaning over, I saw the mouth of the tunnel, and two women there, spinning with the old-time distaff, and talking, evidently of home troubles.

"Ah," said one, "my boy drives the foundry oxen for the last time to-day—he has given notice to the foreman, and is bent on enlisting. So Jacquemin will leave me to-morrow, if not to-day."

"Well," said the other, "your case is hard; but boys are boys, and can take care of themselves; while here's my Mignarde going to service at Saint Morillon farm, where the mistress is the hardest in all France, and in a year poor Mignarde will be old and broken-down!"

"But why let her go? Mignarde has always been so gentle and obedient."

"What can I do? Can I keep her, when she tells me, 'I can't live long, mother. Would you rather see me die before your eyes?'"

"Oh, the crazy children! How they do make themselves and all around them unhappy. Jacquemin says that if I don't let him go, I will see him crushed under the ox-cart with its load of stone, over in the tunnel there."

"Now, I will tell you the reason of it all," said the girl's mother. "My niece, Veronica, told me to-day all about it. Mignarde is going to kill herself with hard work, because she dare not trust your son. You know he was a pretty hard boy."

"Well, he has reformed. He has not quarrelled or got drunk for more than a year, and he has had temptation enough, mercy knows!"

"Wait a moment. Jacquemin is going off because Mignarde will not speak to him. Now, Veronica has learned this from both, and she has just taken Mignarde to the spring in the wood, and will keep her near the mouth of the tunnel till Jacquemin comes back with his load of ore for the foundry. She has arranged with him the sign whether Mignarde has forgiven him. If, like Veronica, she carries her water-jar on her head, it is to be a sign that she cannot trust your son, and will not forgive him; but if she carries it in her hand, then Jacquemin will know that, when work is done, he can come and ask my daughter's hand."

"You will see me at your house to-night," said Jacquemin's mother.

The other shook her head.

"I wish it were so; but I do not believe it. Mignarde is good, but hard to move when she has made up her mind."

Just then I saw a cloud of dust rise in the road, and increase as it approached the tunnel.

The two women crept out of sight to watch unseen, as the young man drove his team in.

"Oh, how I wish I knew what the result will be!" said one. "If I could, I would climb over and see!"

I had become so interested, that, without thinking, I called out—

"Wait! I will tell you in a minute how Mignarde acts!"

Without minding their cry of astonishment as I rose up above them, I ran across the natural bridge, and there, on the other side, were the two girls. One was arguing, reasoning; the other standing in a sort of sullen obstinacy.

I had no difficulty in identifying Mignarde—"good, but hard to move."

Beside each was her water-jar.

Out of the tunnel came the ox-driver's dog, barking with joy, and then turned to wait for his master.

The oxen were not yet out. The two cousins rose. Each put her water-jar on her head.

"He is too good for you!" I heard Veronica say, distinctly.

The oxen appeared—massive, stalwart fellows, with the peculiar cloth or blanket used in those parts. Jacquemin was goading them on.

Again I turned to look at the girls.

Veronica stood as before, with her jar aloft; but Mignarde's had yielded. Hers was held in her hand!

Not a word was said; but Jacquemin tossed up his hat, and with unclouded brow went on. The two girls remained talking, and I hurried back to announce the result to the two mothers.

On their invitation, I went to the village. Jacquemin's mother insisted on my staying till her son came home.

He came, with his two heavy wains, each drawn by three pair of oxen, all with gay branches tied to their horns, while a bunch of ribbons fluttered from his own hat.

I witnessed the asking for Mignarde's hand, was at the engagement supper, and left them next day under a solemn promise to be back at the wedding.

And this is how I came to see the natural tunnel at Langon, and lost a day in my journey.



"JACQUEMIN WAS GOADING THEM ON."—Page 13.

Wanderings in Half-a-Guinea.

BY MAJOR MONK-LAUSEN.

CHAPTER VIII.—UNDER THE MUSHROOM.

WE spent a few more days by the shores of this fine lake, and then made a fresh start. For a fish diet becomes wearisome after a time, and by constant shooting I soon scared all the game from the neighbourhood.

Having lost my diary, I am unable to specify the period which elapsed before the next circumstance which impressed my memory occurred. I have all my life had a morbid objection to thirst, and I therefore made it a general rule to keep to the woods, where, if springs were not met with, there were several descriptions of gourds filled with a pleasant sherbet which, for my part, I preferred very much to water; or else I followed the course of a river.

But there were exceptional inducements besides sport which occasionally led me to strike into the more desolate regions, and one of these was the desire to get to the top of Mount Asor. The summit of this giant had been tantalizing me for days, sometimes revealed to the base, and apparently close at hand; a couple of hours afterwards, perhaps, a faint, lightly tinted peak, far and high in the distant heavens, and cut off from the earth by masses of cloud which veiled its centre.

I don't know why one cannot spend a certain time within sight of a mountain without yearning to climb up it. There are a good many things, I find, that I don't know. Perhaps I hungered after the view from that lofty summit; perhaps I desired to boil a thermometer there; perhaps I merely wanted to be able to say that I had been.

Sheridan would have asked why I could not say that without going; but that is not my way. The fact remained that go I must, or perish in the attempt; and I found on investigation that a like restlessness possessed the rest of the party, with the exception of Peter Tromp.

"The beauty of a mountain is the mountain itself," said this philosopher, "not the surrounding country which is visible from the top of it; and that is all you can see, except clouds, when you are there. To see a mountain properly, you must stop at the bottom."

But the men all shared my ardour to this extent, that they were anxious that I should go to the top, for I could not detect any extraordinary longing to make the ascent themselves. Perhaps they imagined that my success would be celebrated by a big drink.

I shot a buffalo and had him stewed down—bones, hoofs, horns, and all—into a very strong essence, by a process which will be explained in my "Traveller's Cookery Book," to appear shortly. Suffice it here to mention briefly that the entire animal made only ten quarts of jelly. But such jelly! It was of the consistency of gutta-percha, and a piece the size of half-a-crown formed a hearty meal. The hungry traveller places a little lump in his mouth, and there allows it to dissolve. In five minutes he is refreshed, in ten sensibly nourished, in twenty replete.

I took Tulu and his three men, leaving Peter Tromp in charge of Atah and his division, and the cow. They were to remain where they were, on the edge of a forest,

and close to a stream too small for crocodiles, to await our return.

We started two hours before daybreak. The night had been exceptionally close and sultry, and as the day dawned the air seemed to become more and more stifling.

"Milor," said Peter, who insisted on accompanying me for a few miles across the plain, "you had better turn back with me."

"Why so?" I asked in surprise.

"The barometer has fallen."

"Then pick it up. It is not broken, I hope?"

"Don't joke, milor. I speak meteorologically. It has fallen as low as it can."

"Then," said I, after deliberating awhile, "I should not wonder if we had a storm."

"A storm? A hurricane, milor! Pray turn back."

"The Darralls never turn back," I replied, translating my family motto. "Good-bye."

The faithful Peter wrung my hand, and departed.

We four, each carrying a quart of jelly and several gourds of water, continued our journey straight towards the Asor, our course lying over a plain, now grassy, now barren, now studded with small clumps of palm trees.

When the sun was high in the heavens, I called a halt, and we took shelter in an oasis of this description from the noontide heat. Just beyond the palms, and growing at the foot of a slab of rock, was the most singular-looking tree I had ever seen. It had no branches or leaves, but was topped with a wide circular canopy, which looked in the distance like a thatched roof.

On a close inspection, however, I found that this apparent tree was nothing else than a monstrous mushroom, the stem of which I was unable to span with both arms, while the top, a good ten feet from the ground, was of the circumference of a moderately sized circular English haystack. Having investigated this overgrown fungus, I returned to the palm trees, and settled myself for a siesta.

I was awakened by a sound as of all the crockery in the empire of China being smashed by a simultaneous discharge of all the heavy artillery in Woolwich Arsenal, and found myself in such darkness that I feared I must have lost my eyesight; till a violet blaze, which showed me plain, mountain, mushroom and frightened followers, reassured me on this head. Then what I took for a white cocoa-nut fell close to me, nearly knocking my brains out; but stooping to pick it up, I found that it was a hailstone.

"To the mushroom!" I cried, between two thunder-claps; and in a moment we were all beneath its shelter.

Thick as the fungus roof was, however, I doubt whether it would have stood the cannonade of that hailstorm, if it had not been for the partial protection of the slab of rock before mentioned, which also broke the violence of the wind, by which we might otherwise have been swept away.

CHAPTER IX.—UP THE MOUNTAIN.

INDEED, it was a very violent paroxysm of nature that we witnessed; but happily, like all violent paroxysms, it did not last long. When it was at its height, my followers one and all fell on their faces, in abject terror, exclaiming—

"The moon is falling!"

And I saw a most awe-inspiring spectacle—a world

on fire, rushing madly in from space. Exploding, spluttering, hissing, casting fragments about like a firework, it smote the surface of our earth not a mile from where we were standing: the ground rocked and heaved, and the fumes of sulphur nearly stifled us. Almost immediately afterwards the hail became reduced to the size of cricket balls, then ceased; the lightning flashes grew fainter and less frequent, the thunder rolled away in the distance, the sky cleared, and once more the equatorial sun shone forth, and we endeavoured to come out from under our mushroom.

This was no easy task, for the hailstones, falling from rock and mushroom top, had barricaded us round with a wall of ice.

When at last we effected our escape, what a scene of desolation presented itself! The palm grove was entirely levelled; monkeys and snakes lay dead in all directions, smashed to bits by the pitiless hail; the roof of the mushroom was stuck all over with the more angular masses of ice, and glittered like an umbrella studded with diamonds—such a one as the Magna Charta Association has not yet presented to its noble founder.

Hurrying from the place as fast as the hailstones which still strewed the plain permitted, we made our way to the spot where the *aërolite* had fallen. The hole which it had made was, I should say, some hundred yards across; but the sulphurous fumes still issuing from the molten mass were too powerful to admit of a close inspection, and I had to content myself with examining some of the *débris* which had been freely scattered over a path of several miles in its course. Amongst these, I picked up several tiny flint arrow-heads, and other stone works of art, which clearly proved that the miniature world which had just come to grief had been inhabited.

Fortunately, the *aërolite* had travelled from the direction in which we were going, so that these investigations did not much delay our progress, and we camped on the first spur of the Asor that night.

On the following morning we began to climb in earnest, and the difficulties not being greater than usual (see "Alpine Travels," *passim*), by midday we reached the snow line.

Some ten thousand feet higher; two of the men were knocked up, so I sent them down again, and told them to wait at the bottom; an hour after, the third went snow blind; so, as Atah was bleeding freely from the ears, and showed other symptoms of having had enough of it, I told him to lead the other back, and went on alone.

Hitherto the only serious obstacle which had opposed my course, independently of the steepness of the rocks, and the difficulty of breathing in the rarefied atmosphere, had been a peculiar sort of cloud, not thin and impalpable, like an ordinary mist, but substantial.

I am rather at a loss to explain it. Have you ever been into the laundry on a washing day, when it was full of soapsuddy steam? Well, it was something like that, only very much thicker, and cold instead of hot. It was not snow; but I could take handfuls of it, and compress them into a frozen substance like a snowball. In trying this latter experiment, by the bye, I found some foreign wriggling substance left in my hand, and a closer inspection showed me that I held a little tadpole, a baby leech, and a tiny carp. So that those

people who laugh at the showers of frogs, &c., which are reported by the newspapers every autumn are perhaps unduly sceptical.

The difficulty of forcing my way up through this atmosphere was very great, and I could not breathe unless I kept my face close to the surface of the rock which I was engaged in scaling. But the ascent was so steep that it was for the most part otherwise necessary to do this.

Fortunately, this belt of dense cloud was not many yards deep, and I soon struggled through it. At last, however, my progress was fairly arrested, for I came to a coping which projected far over my head, so that when I had scrambled to the top of the wall of rock over which it projected, I was done.

You would have said that Asor had once been a burning mountain, and had been put out by some giant hand clapping an extinguisher upon it; for the cap of rock which crowned the summit assumed that form so exactly, that if the reader will kindly put an extinguisher on a candle, and imagine me climbing up the taper—by the aid of a gutter, say—until I was stopped by the projection, he will conceive a not inaccurate idea of my position.

I worked to the right, I worked to the left, but still the same impediment met me; and at last I sat down on a crag, wild with despair at being foiled, and endeavoured to calm myself down to the necessity of returning to my party below, for once ignominiously defeated. While I was sulking thus, half inclined to dash myself to the bottom of the mountain for spite at not being able to reach the top, I suddenly saw something like a rope hanging over the edge of the projecting rocks above, and moved round to where it was, to examine it more closely. It was alive, it wriggled, and in its writhings swung inwards, within reach of my hand, and I caught it. As I imagined, it proved to be a long, thin snake.

But why did it amuse itself by dangling thus over a precipice, and why was it fast at the head end? Very fast it most certainly was; for I pulled and jerked, without feeling it give to me in the least.

Then an awful idea came into my head. Why not endeavour to surmount the projecting ledge by its means? It was little short of suicide to grasp that smooth surface with hands and legs, swing out over the abyss, and commence swarming up it; but I regret to confess that I was guilty of the act, and the thought of it causes me to shudder as I write.

At the moment, however, I had no time to look below or get giddy, for the serpent's skin was so smooth and slippery that I had to bring my teeth to bear in order to preserve my hold, which I don't think the reptile liked, for his undulations became more violent. I should never have got up, and was contemplating getting sufficient sway on the living rope to land me in my former position as my only chance of salvation, when the problem was solved by the snake being drawn upwards, and presently I went bundling over the projecting ledge, and found myself floundering amongst a party of nasty, half-fledged eaglets, who were fortunately too busily engaged in hauling at the snake to peck at me; and I scrambled out of the nest, and was well on my way up the final snow slopes, before the parent birds came swooping down to see how their young ones were getting on with the little luxury they had brought them.

I call these birds eagles, because they lived in those places which eagles alone are supposed to inhabit, or else they were not at all like any other eagles I have seen. They were five times as big, for one thing; slower in movement; less handy with beak and claws, which were by no means of so formidable a character; and much softer in their plumage. In short, they were more like owls; but we will say eagles, giving them the benefit of the doubt.

My task was now an easy one comparatively, as I had only the extreme rarefaction of the air, the depth of the snow, in which I sank above the knees at every step, and the sloping ascent to contend with; and at last, after twenty-four hours of continual climbing, without any rest but the enforced one while I was under the coping, I stood on the highest peak.

Here I drew out my flask, containing a thimbleful of brandy kept for the purpose, and drank the Queen's health. I did not boil a thermometer, for two reasons. First of all, I had no means of lighting a fire; and, in the second place, I had no thermometer.

I will fairly confess, however, that if I had been able to perform that scientific operation, the result would have been immaterial, since I have no notion how the height of a mountain is determined by it. But it is the proper thing to do, I believe, and I regret the forced omission.

Of the exact altitude of Mount Asor, then, I pretend to give no information. My usual pace on the level is five miles an hour; and as from the time of leaving the actual plain from which the mountain springs, I was actually walking for quite fifty hours, that would make two hundred and fifty miles, which is, of course, absurd. I suppose half a mile an hour was nearer my average while climbing the lower part, and hampered with my retainers.

It is a remarkably high mountain, and there is a very extensive view from the top, that is all I know.

When the first flush of success was over, and I had sucked a jujube of the essence, and got my pipe drawing freely, I permitted the reflection, hitherto driven away, of how I was to get down again to occupy my mind. How was I? The snake would be in a couple of hundred pieces, if not half digested, by now.

The Egotist's Note-book.

IT is a great blessing that in these dreadful days means should be placed in the way of our youth to keep themselves safe from the attacks of highwaymen, footpads, garotters, the savage beasts which roam our streets, or lie watching at the corners of our brick and mortar jungles. In fact, there is now on sale a small pocket pistol, "The Youth's Protector," a well-finished little firearm, guaranteed to send a bullet through a wooden board. Now, I suppose our youths require protection; but if I catch one of my boys with one of these weapons, I shall have so much strong desire for his safety that I shall smash the pistol and thrash the boy. Other parents, of course, can do as they please. Will some other manufacturer kindly provide good keen-pointed dirks or daggers, knuckledusters, and life preservers especially for the use of our boys?—they must want them, and a few fatal accidents would be refreshing this hot weather.

I am of course very sorry about the poor gentleman who is advertised for in the *Daily News* as lost in crossing the Cumberland Hills, and I sincerely hope that he may be found safe and well; but I am terribly exercised in spirit about a part of the advertisement. It describes him as having a brown paper parcel strapped across his chest. Now, there is something very mysterious about that. A brown paper parcel—and strapped across his chest! I want to know what was in that brown paper parcel, and why it was strapped across his chest. It could not have been sandwiches, nor flannel shirts. A man would not carry his pomatum there, nor his boots, nor his Sunday coat. What was it, then? Fervently I hope that the unfortunate gentleman may soon be found, and this brown paper mystery be thoroughly cleared up.

By the way, I suppose Don Pedro Verdad is in some way vinous; but on the first occasion of the appearance of the above advertisement, the name appeared in such close proximity that one was disposed to imagine that it was the Don who had tried to cross from Wastwater, and had been bagged or swallowed up in mist.

A sad story hangs to this little incident, unless the writer can redeem his letter. A bottle was picked up recently on the beach at Quann Abbey, with the following note:—"Ten miles off Brest. Dearest Carrie—Our little boat, which started on the 10th, has two or three times nearly been capsized. We are now in another squall, and am afraid there is no hope.—Ever your own true friend, K. C. B."

The poor Frenchman who leaped out of a train on the South-Western the other day must have had the laws of inertia left out of his education, as he might probably, by jumping with the train, have spared himself some of his sufferings. It is easy to understand the effort of a convict to recover his liberty, and that he might leap from a fast-going train; but for a person who finds himself going at the rate of forty miles an hour to rush out because he has got in the wrong carriage, savours so strongly of Colney Hatch, that one is disposed to say, where was his keeper?

The latest novelty I have come across in the art of advertising—and it is an art—is that of a noted hair-dresser, who has provided a cosy little 'bus to convey his customers to his place of business, "free of charge." My country readers may think I am poking fun at them, but I am not, for the said conveyance may be seen daily in the streets of this great city of ours; and what is more, I have availed myself of the luxury, and at my journey's end been artistically operated upon, my moustache still bearing evidence of the peruquier's skill.

Here are some Lord John Manners-isms. As Postmaster-General, he has been called upon to transmit a greater number of fearsome things than were ever before committed to his care in a given time. The other day a couple of newts were stopped in St. Martin's-le-Grand, it being found necessary to water them in order to keep them alive whilst they were waiting to be applied for. Newts are positively harmless, but they are scarcely such things as one would like to find

loose in a letter-box or bag, any more than the following objects, which have been observed whilst passing through the General Post Office: A bat, a snake, a crayfish, frogs (from South America), leeches, snails, beetles, caterpillars, mice, and last, but certainly not least, puppies. Other oddities—not alive—which “the department” has been called upon at different times to deliver, have comprised a packet of sausages, a tin of Devonshire cream, a box of shrimps, a German sausage, and other comestibles; whilst personal effects have appeared in various forms, including umbrellas and walking-sticks, telescopes, hats, and articles of ladies' attire, such as those shops which lay themselves out for the supply of *trousseaux* are best acquainted with.

For thorough painful sadness—for a few words having a direct appeal to the heart—I remember nothing more touching than the account given of the widowed sorrow of the Bulgarian women in the letters of the *Daily News* correspondent of the 22nd August. After describing some of the horrors seen on his way to Batak, such as the discovery of a heap of bones, among which from his saddle he counted easily one hundred skulls, all those of women, he proceeds:—“We descended into the town. Within the shattered walls of the first house we came to was a woman sitting on a heap of rubbish, rocking herself to and fro, wailing a kind of monotonous chant, half sung, half sobbed, that was not without a wild, discordant melody. In her lap she held a babe, and another child sat beside her patiently and silently, and looked at us as we passed with wondering eyes. She paid no attention to us; but we bent our ear to hear what she was saying, and our interpreter said it was as follows:—“My home, my home, my poor home, my sweet home; my husband, my husband, my poor husband, my dear husband; my home, my sweet home,” and so on, repeating the words over and over again a thousand times. In the next house were two engaged in the same way; one old, the other young, repeating words nearly identical. ‘I had a home and now I have none; I had a husband and now I am a widow; I had a son and now I have none; I had five children and now I have one,’ while rocking themselves to and fro, beating their heads and wringing their hands.’ These were women who had escaped from the massacre.” Every Englishman should get the *Daily News* for the above-mentioned date, read, and then ask himself why we stand still and make no effort.

Never, O, never let the irreverent jeer and make fun of tourist tickets more; let not ribald jokes be passed on the immortal Cook, who prepares such pleasant refectations for the jaded appetite of the traveller; for has not the great chief magistrate of London City, Milor Maire himself, taken unto himself Cook's tickets for himself and lady, besides others of the branches of his family, and gone off to Switzerland? It is to be hoped that, as the state carriage would be as out of place amongst the mountains as a pair of skates on the glaciers, he has taken the civic robes. We have a wonderful belief in Bumbledom on the Continent.

The local authorities have been for some time past endeavouring to put a stop to the Sunday trading in

Leather-lane, hitherto without success. But what the strong arm of the law has failed to do, the strong effluvia from carbolic acid has accomplished; for I read that on Sunday last a brisk trade was being carried on from nine till eleven a.m., till the officials of the District Board of Works put in an appearance, and gave the costers and shopkeepers notice to cease their callings, without visible effect; when several vans came on the scene, laden with water charged with carbolic acid. This was diffused with so great a liberality that within a short time half the shops were closed, and over one hundred stalls removed.

What a large number of our people must learn their political lessons entirely from the comic papers. The influence that *Punch* has had upon the world must have been very great, and the effect of some of Tenniel's best cartoons incalculable. Many of them have been lessons whose great import have been caught in an instant, and never forgotten. But *Punch* has not stood alone. The cartoons of the *Tomahawk* and *Will-o-the-Wisp* had in their time no little influence; while now, those of Mr. John Proctor in *Funny Folks* are taking the lead. If the eye is cast over those which have appeared during the past few weeks, their strength of design and power in carrying out will be manifest. The peep into Blue Beard's blue chamber of Bulgarian horrors, and the pass of Disraeli to the upper circle, are exemplifications of that which has been said.

Is it not a pity that tradespeople in our large thoroughfares will go in for the decoy-duck system of putting one thing in their windows and offering you another for sale within their shops? I grant that it is a trouble to alter their window after it is dressed; but when an article is put there, priced, and it takes your fancy, you wish to have that and no other. My reason for saying this is, that a few days since I saw a fan in the window of a large shop in the Strand, the price was upon it, I thought it reasonable, that it would please a lady of my acquaintance, and having, for a wonder, a few spare shillings, I went in to buy. A most polite assistant bowed from behind the counter, and pointing to the fan within the glass case, I said I would have it. Picture my astonishment when the polite assistant requested me to step up on the first floor. I did not want to go up to the first floor to a set of show-rooms to see other fans. I wanted the one I saw; but I was requested again to step upstairs, and I, being of an ill-natured disposition, declined, and walked out of the shop, with, I think—I am not sure—the P. A.'s voice saying that he would get the one I pointed out if I would stay. Why exhibit and price articles if they are not to be sold?—unless they are but so many baits to a trap.

The almost inhuman levity displayed by Lord Beaconsfield—then Mr. Disraeli—when the Bulgarian atrocities were first brought under the notice of the House of Commons, excited so much indignation in the popular mind, that the right hon. gentleman was subsequently compelled to find some plausible excuse to justify his Turkish proclivities; and in his last speech in the Lower House he took great pains to show that the first consideration of an English statesman was to protect the national interests. “Our duty at this critical moment,” said the right hon. gentleman, “is to

maintain the Empire of England." Some years ago a distinguished statesman and novelist, in a work which commanded general attention, put the following expressions into the mouth of one of his characters:—"The external life of a nation is its most important one. A nation, as an individual, has duties to fulfil, appointed by God and his moral law; the individual towards his family, his town, his country; the nation towards the country of countries, humanity—the outward world. I firmly believe that we fail, and renounce the religious and divine element of our life, whenever we betray or neglect those duties." The title of the book was "Lo-thair;" its author, the Right Hon. Benjamin Disraeli.

The Gainsborough picture, of whose loss so much has been heard of late, is said to have been insured, not against fire only, but damage and loss; and this is alleged to have been carried out at Lloyd's—the picture being underwritten, as if it had been a ship, to the amount of £11,000. A curious wreck for the underwriters to deal with.

A writer on cricket cries out against the lavish luxury of the modern game, as played at Lord's. He thinks it is curious that it should not have occurred to the modern Sybarite that a cricket ground is scarcely the place on which to display silver plate and powdered footmen—white table cloths and frosted wine-coolers. The luxury of luncheon is an implied insult to cricket. It means that the game is so uninteresting that it can only be tolerated with intervals of imbibing. Cricket, after all, has not deserved this reproach. It has followed the fortunes of England wherever Englishmen have led it—in India, in Australia, in all our colonies; and it has never yet been dependent upon the assistance of John Thomas with the powdered hair, or the careful foresight of the domestic cook. Cricket has flourished because it has been typical of English energy; and to those who cannot separate cricket from luxury, we would recommend a homely passage of "Pickwick," recounting the memorable struggle between "All Muggleton" and "Dingley Dell." In the pretty garden behind the racecourse at Ascot, under the trees on the wooded embankment at Goodwood, in the pleasant hay meadows at Henley, luncheons are all very well, and decidedly appropriate; but the public school and University cricket matches at Lord's were, on the whole, far better when the spectators were contented with a sandwich and a pot of "shandy-gaff," and when the pleasant peace of the cricket ground was alone broken by the familiar voice of the old waiter coming from the tavern, "Any orders, gentlemen?" In these well-remembered days, it was permitted to sprawl upon the grass and to talk of old cricketing experiences with familiar schoolfellows and chums; but now, at Lord's, a pipe is a forbidden luxury, and the man who drinks a glass of beer is regarded as a barbarian!

In turning over the leaves of vol. i. of the new series of this magazine, I came across, on page 5, a little poem, called "In the Union," forcibly illustrating the inhumanity of parting husband and wife. Who knows, perhaps these homely and touchingly worded verses have reached the eyes and hearts of the powers that be. Without, however, laying such flattering unction to the soul of the writer, I am pleased to see that a pro-

vision appears in the new Poor Law Act, enacting that "When any two persons being husband and wife shall be admitted into any workhouse, and either of them shall be infirm, sick, or disabled by any injury, or above the age of sixty years, it shall be lawful for the guardians of the union or parish to which such workhouse shall belong to permit, in their discretion, such husband and wife to live together, and every such case shall be reported forthwith to the Local Government Board." Truly, a liberal step from a Conservative Government.

I read that a relic of the Great Fire of London has been found at Eastcheap. The fire of 1666 is said to have begun in Pudding-lane and ended at Pie-corner, and the identical spot where the conflagration originated is pointed out by an inscription on an old stone recently unearthed in the cellars of a warehouse on Pudding-lane. The inscription runs as follows:—"Here by ye Permission of Heaven Hell broke loose upon this Protestant Citye from the malicious hearts of barbarous papists by ye hand of their agent Hubert, who confessed and on ye Ruines of this place declared ye Fact for which he was hanged (vizt.), 'That here began that Dreadful Fire which is described and perpetuated on and by the neighbouring Pillar.' Erected Anno 1681 in the Mayoraltie of Sir Patience Word, Kt." The stone was found face downwards—a proof that it had remained undisturbed for two centuries. Some coins were near the stone, and probably Hubert's skeleton is not far off. The pillar referred to is, of course, the Monument on Fish-street-hill, on which the inscription accusing the Roman Catholics, after being erased and restored, was finally effaced in 1831. This stone, although now broken in half, is of considerable historic interest, and is certainly worthy of preservation.

People often talk of the buried riches of the sea, but there can be no doubt that, in spite of its smaller extent, earth could very readily compete with its fluid neighbour. Every day some fresh curiosity is being discovered. Among the objects recently found in the excavations at Rome are a large block of amethyst, numerous amulets in the form of animals, a bag of chalcodony, thirty-one stone coffers containing iron weapons; a woman's head, life-size, well modelled in terra-cotta, on which are traces of painting, and a little statue in Greek marble representing a man lying down asleep; while at Lyons some workmen have come upon a magnificent piece of Roman mosaic.

THE season has arrived when every one is thinking of turning from the sultriness of town life to the pleasures of a country tour. Ladies who take very little exercise when at home, with true British courage often undertake long and tedious journeys. It is of the highest importance, under such circumstances, that the clothing should in no way impede the proper circulation of the blood, but especially should the old but bad practice of gartering the leg be avoided. Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London, has provided the only means of remedying this in his New Patent Stocking Suspender, which he will send by post for 2d. extra. The prices are—Children's, 1s. 6d.; maids', 2s.; ladies', 3s. Our advice is to write at once for a pair.

The Haunted Man.

IN a whisper, mind—in the gentlest, the most sighing of whispers—I tell you this. In fear and trembling, too, all the time, for *it* might hear me.

You observe, I say it; for I cannot apply actual distinction to the weird little entity that torments me. At the same time, though, I find that I have often called it *him*, and, in a misty, wandering way, associated the *thing* with the tricky-looking sprite who stands with his hands upon his hips in the Landseer picture of "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

The fact is, I have been haunted for the past five years—I, the simple-minded, calmly living, seventh-rate literary man who pens these lines; and my innocent bachelor life has been made a torment to me by something, of which, as you see, I only dare speak in a whisper.

You are shaking your head! Don't say you are not, for I can feel it mentally; and my perceptions are now those of the most acute. Let me hasten, then, to reassure you—to enlighten you upon the point you are quietly discussing.

No: there has not been the slightest manifestation of insanity in my family.

Again: my pulse gives with calm regularity the proper number of beats to the minute.

My blood is of the normal temperature.

It is not incipient *delirium tremens*, for I was never inebriated but once in my life, and then I was so dreadfully ill the next day that I made a vow, which I have religiously kept, and am always considered an abstemious man.

So, once more, in a calm whisper, I declare to you that I am haunted—bewitched—ill-wished—evil-eyed—overlooked—or in some way suffering from a spell. In fact, there must be something in the matter not hitherto dreamed of in my philosophy, and I tremble lest it should come of it.

But let me explain—let me give you a sample of the kind of annoyance to which I am subjected, and during which it always seems to me that I can hear the silvery tinkle of a very small kind of laughter floating about the room.

It was only yesterday that I required my daily remembrancer—the diary in which I record the trifles of my life, and note my engagements. It was gone.

That book lies on my study table, and I was put out by its loss. I searched bookcase, drawers, in folios, amongst papers, turned out my desk, got into a violent perspiration, went and bullied the servant, rose into a towering rage; and at last, quite exhausted, and fuming with annoyance, I threw myself into my chair—and found that diary!

Where did I find it?

I'll tell you: that little book lay in its usual place upon the study table.

Now, you may argue for a week, and you will not convince me that some sprite had not hidden that book away until it was tired of laughing at me, when the book was replaced.

Another specimen.

I have a custom, drilled into me in childhood, of carefully folding my clothes before retiring to rest. I never kick one thing here and another there, after the habitude of the reckless, but place each garment ready

to be donned in the morning. Now, I am ready to make affidavit that those things are all right at night; but when I have left rising till the last moment, just leaving myself sufficient time to dress and catch the train by which I am going with a friend, there is invariably something wrong. Now it is a button off my trousers. If I get them on, and find them all right, the tongue is gone from my brace buckle. Or it may be a stud dropped from my shirt; the button-hole split of my collar; or, more likely, a button grown over-ripe and ready to drop, swinging only by one thread from the most prominent portion of my coat.

At another time I hear the servant come up with my boots, as I lie in bed. She bumps them down, as servants will bump boots down; and, in that pleasant, semi-unconscious way in which one lies of a morning before rising, I seem to see those boots, and I wonder whether they have been carefully dried; for the previous day was wet, and I have had a horror of damp boots ever since I read somewhere that they were a prolific cause of catarrh. Then I wonder, too, why it is that servants have such peculiar notions respecting the anatomy of the human foot masculine, and credit it with abnormally turned-out toes, from the way in which they always reverse male boots—the right on the left side, the left upon the right. They never do so with boots feminine. I lie, then, seeing those misplaced boots there; and when I have made my plunge out, done my tubbing, and have arrived at the stage when I want those boots, I open the door to get them, and they are not there!

Now, I am certain that they were there—I heard the girl bring them; but all the same, after a few minutes' interval, I ring sharply, and the maid comes and knocks.

"My boots!—I'm waiting for them," I say.

"Plee, sir, they're out here," says the girl, in an ill-used tone.

Whereupon I go indignantly to the door, with a brush in one hand, into which I have savagely driven the fellow brush, so that they adhere together, and my hair all down over my forehead.

Yes, there are the boots; and put wrong as to rights and lefts, as a matter of course.

Now, how did these boots get away, and how did they come back? For I'm sure the girl did not bring them back this time.

I told you how particular I am about folding my clothes at night. This extends to garments that I do not wear every day—dress coat, for instance, left in the drawer during a tour or shooting expedition.

Now, *it* won't leave those garments alone; and whenever I take them out after absence, they invariably look as if they had been used for the raising of money, and suffered from the pawnbroker's roll, so evident too often in the British workman's Sunday coat, which is creased from top to bottom.

There is another way in which I am terribly annoyed. Being a regular 'bus man—of course, I don't mean a driver or a conductor, but a traveller by omnibus—from motives of economy, I have noticed the nuisance that the fair sex—especially the fat fair sex, which never travels without a large bundle, which they plant on somebody's knee when entering—is to conductor, driver, and fellow-passengers, by keeping the vehicle waiting while money is dislodged from a pocket some-

where in the region of folds, or from the corner of a handkerchief, in which it is tightly tied in a knot which won't come undone; while one lady always produces her cash wet—out of her mouth. I have noticed all this, I say, and in consequence I provide myself with a threepenny-piece, a fourpenny, or sixpence, and place it in my waistcoat pocket ready for alighting and paying without requiring change.

Do you think that I can find that coin when I require it? If you do, you are mistaken. I grope for it with my glove on; I hunt for it with my glove off; I dodge first in one corner, then in the other, and each time along the intermediate channel; but no—there is no coin, and the conductor ironically asks me if I want to keep the 'bus all day.

Of course I don't; and I feel very much provoked as I produce my portemonnaie, drop my umbrella in the muddy street where we are standing, fumble out a two-shilling piece, and wait for change, with all the passengers craning forward to look, and the driver shouting to his mate to—

"Look alive, there!"

I get my change—I have already recovered my umbrella—and I bound to the pavement shore, out of the muddy river, after narrowly escaping a run down from a Hansom, when, to my annoyance, I am minus a glove, and—yes, there it lies, in the middle of the road, ground into the mud by the Hansom wheel.

Of course, I have to go on, buy a new pair, and as I pay for them, having grown cool in the shop, I mentally say, "I wonder what became of that fourpenny-piece," and my hand involuntarily goes to the pocket of my vest, and—yes, there it is—I can feel it plainly enough through the cloth.

I merely say, where was that little coin before?

I mentioned my loss, and that naturally brings me back to gloves—a covering for the hands in which I have been nearly ruined.

With my customary practice of neatness, I double my gloves together, especially the white and lavender kids, which, between ourselves, I always make last as long as possible, and then send them to be cleaned. Now, the home of my light kid gloves is in my left-hand tail coat pocket, and I fish them out just as I am going into theatre or "at home;" and this is always the case: I put on one, get it buttoned, and am about to put on its fellow, when I find that if it is a white glove *on* my hand, I hold a lavender kid *in* my hand, or *vice versa*. They are sure to be odd ones, and I am certain that I put them away in pairs.

Why don't I look before I start, you will say. Because I don't think to look, and one does not feel it necessary after regular precautions. And again I say, How is this?

If it be not the workings of some sprite full of mischief, what is it?

Again, I find myself putting chlorodyne on my handkerchief, because the bottles have been changed; and when, in a fit of passion, I dash down the nasty, ethery, pepperminty pain-easer, take a clean pocket handkerchief, and scent that, I find I am doing it with the tincture of myrrh, or the gummy stuff the fellow bored me into buying when last my hair was cut.

Only a week ago, I had my breakfast spoiled by a letter, which came by post. It was as follows, and there was an enclosure.

"12, Jermyn-street, Friday.

"SIR—I am at a loss to understand the meaning of this note, and I should be glad if you would explain, for I am a man who makes it his rule neither to borrow nor *lend* money. If you had any ideas of the latter kind in sending it, believe me that a frank request would have been better.—I am,

"Your obedient servant,

"J. WELLSBY PURNOW.

"To T. Woolly, Esq."

I was amazed, and sat with the note in my hand, unable to comprehend it. I had asked Purnow to come and dine with me at the Curaçoa Club, and wouldn't have asked him for money for the world. Besides, I didn't want any—just then.

At last, by way of solving the mystery, I took up the enclosure, to read, in my own hand:—

"14A, Bye-street, Monday.

"DEAR OLD BOY—Let me have that ten pounds, there's a good fellow. You promised it before Christmas, and it's now May.—Thine,

"T. WOOLLY."

Yes, I wrote that, but it was to Jack Shorter, who owes me no end of borrowed money, which I get back a little at a time. But how did Purnow get it? Stop—no—yes—no—to be sure I did: I wrote to both at the same time, and the notes must have been put—yes, I deliberately say, in a whisper, mind—*put* into the wrong envelopes!

I was aghast for a time—it seemed so horrible; but, at last, I recovered myself sufficiently to take my hat and go to the telegraph office, to send a message to Purnow, telling him it was a mistake, and that he must come directly, for I had ordered a capital dinner at the club.

I got that message very cleverly within twenty words, got out a shilling, and was just going to hand both to the pleasing-looking young telegraph clerkess, when a horrible thought ran through me like a chill, and I stood as if transfixed. Jack Shorter had got Purnow's note, and *he* would come to the club to dinner! Worse still, to me, as we sat together with coffee and cigars, he would borrow another ten-pound note of me, or perhaps be kind enough to take it in two fives.

What was I to do? I dare not bring those two men together. I did not want Jack. Oh, it was dreadful! But the dinner was ordered, and might just as well be eaten; so I went away—making the pleasing-looking young telegraph clerkess look upon me as very strange in my ways—and wrote an explanatory letter to Purnow, appointing another day for the dinner; but he declined to come, and I feel sure he believed my note was a try-on for money.

But Jack Shorter came, and ate my dinner; and as I said, so he did—he borrowed two fives over our coffee, which sum he will never pay.

It's an awful position for a man to be in, and I suffer from it at every turn. I have found my gun unaccountably rusty; my fishing lines horribly tangled, and my top joints broken. I have found my choice cigars mouldy, my soda-water without a fizz left in the bottle, my tea disappear; and the number of umbrellas that have deliberately gone away I dare not enumerate, for my sake—not yours.

Enough. I am the Haunted Man, and my sprite will not leave me. He puts fuel in my pockets, rubs my hat nap the wrong way, blunts the edges of my razors, breaks the teeth out of my comb, and in one way and another reduces me into the state of a hypochondriacal dyspeptic. As before said, I tell it you in a whisper, lest evil should come upon me sevenfold; for mine is a malignant sprite, and to you, good reader, I wish a happier fate.

Ha! ha! By Jove, what fun! I've just turned this out of my desk, where it's lain for six months. I meant to send it to a magazine, and here it goes at last, if any one will have it. But, I say, the spirit's exorcised, gone, vanished—everything's in its place, and there's a place for everything. Apple-pie order and sunshine; unity, peace, and concord. *E pluribus unum—Honi soit qui mal y pense—Decus et tutamen!* Excuse my high spirits; it's all due to St. Lydia, who took pity upon my forlorn lot, and married me, driving all sprites away.

I say, though, only think! Jack Shorter has come in for a plum, and no sooner did he hear that I was going to be married than he clapped a cheque for a cool hundred into my hand, saying that he didn't know how we stood, but we'd cry quits, and that would pay the trip.

This comes unknown to St. L.

Flowery Rhetoric.

THE following good story is told of a Worcester gentleman who recently sent a fine French clock to a jeweller to be repaired, with the request that each item of repair should be specifically stated. The "bill of particulars" was rendered as follows:—

To removing alluvial deposit and oleaginous conglomerate from clock <i>à la</i> French. . .	\$0 50
To replacing in appropriate juxtaposition the constituent components of said clock . . .	o 50
To lubricating with oleaginous solution the apex of pinions of said clock	o 50
To adjusting horologically the isochronal mechanism of said clock	o 50
To equalizing the acoustic resultant of escape-wheel percussion upon the verge pallets of said clock	o 50
To adjusting the distance between the centre of gravity of the pendulum and its point of suspension, so that the vibration of the pendulum shall cause the index hand to indicate approximately the daily arrival of the sun at its meridian height	o 50
Total	\$3 0

IN answer to the inquiry of a correspondent concerning Captain Boyton's natal place, we can merely surmise from his buoyancy that he may be a Cork man.

THERE was no preaching in our town last Sunday, and all in consequence of a young girl, who, inspired by the world, the flesh, and a little of some one mixed, sat down late on Saturday evening, and sent a note to the pastors. Each contained these words:—"All is discovered—fly." Every one of the four flew.

Roses on the Brink.

BY WILLIAM SAWYER.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—A DOUBLE SURPRISE.

"YOUR father is a nice sort of man, upon my word," cried Duplex, not at all moved; "but I dare say we shall be able to appease his wrath. I shall have you to plead for me, and your advocacy will go a great way."

"I plead for you?" Zerina cried, indignantly.

"Certainly."

"I would rather urge him on to madness."

"No doubt—in your present mood."

"That mood will not change."

"Indeed!"

"The detestation I feel for you I shall always feel."

"You think so?"

"I know it."

"Ah, my child, how little any of us know ourselves! In a few weeks all this will be altered. Your eternal hate will have changed to devoted love. It will be 'My dear colonel!' 'My darling pet!' 'My sweetest Duplex!' from morning till night."

"Never!"

"Tut, tut! You don't know. Why, what would you say if I told you that I had half made up my mind to marry you—positively to marry you?"

"I should refuse you."

"What!"

He screamed out the word in a high key, as if it were impossible that he could have heard aright.

"I—should—refuse—you."

She repeated the sentence, with a pause between each word.

"Now, my dear child," he replied, seriously, "this is nonsense, you know. A man of my rank, with my fortune and resources, couldn't come to a girl who, but a few weeks since, was living in a wretched hole down at Wapping—a hermit, a slave, a mere vegetating outcast of society—and say to her, 'Take my name, share my fortune, be mistress of my town and country houses, ride about in my carriages, wear my family diamonds, meet my friends, and share my amusements,' and be refused. Refused!—impossible! By Jove, you almost tempt me to make the experiment."

And he stood hesitating for the moment, and regarding her with ravenous eyes, as if not altogether indisposed to take the desperate step he had mentioned.

But if in a moment of infatuation he was in anywise disposed to be thus rash, he received no encouragement from Zerina. She, in a passionate outburst of feeling, declared in many words that she would have none of him, that he was hateful to her, that she loathed his presence, that she would rather die than share life with him, and so on, with so much earnestness that it was impossible not to see that her words were dictated by the genuine sentiments of her heart.

The colonel felt this very distinctly; but he had no faith in women. He had been trained in the worst possible school, and regarded them as mere playthings—quite inferior in organization, and in every respect, mental and moral, to the lordly beings to whose pleasures they were born to minister. So while he saw that Zerina was of this mood now, he did not doubt but that she would be in quite a different mood

to-morrow. At least, it was more than likely; so he listened without emotion, and passed off her bitter words in his lightest and airiest fashion.

"You have one fault, child," he said, by way of reply; "you suffer yourself to be too much in earnest. Life isn't worth it."

"What! Should one never be in earnest?" she demanded.

"Not about trifles."

"Trifles! Is it a trifle that I—"

"Now, now, I know what you would say; you would favour me with some remark about your present position. Well, I dare say this seems a serious matter to you at this moment. You think it is."

"I know it," she answered, promptly.

"What, is it so very dreadful to live in a mansion, to be treated as a lady, and to have a devoted slave at your feet? The idea of this being a hardship will appear to you in time to come as ridiculous as it does to me at this moment. But the fact is, your education has been neglected. You have been taught to regard things as of being of moment which are in reality mere shadows, while you are in danger of letting the great object of life slip through your fingers. The great object of life is enjoyment. Life is only of value while it is enjoyed. Pleasure is the sauce that makes it worth while to swallow it. The wise therefore cultivate pleasure—raise it to the dignity of one of the Fine Arts—so that they may enhance the value of their existence. I have done so consistently. I press everything into the service of enjoyment—love included. And it is because I value life less than that which gives the zest to life, and makes it tolerable, that I never allow anything to stand in the way of the realization of my wishes. Thus, when I found that I should find pleasure in cultivating my passion for the little Zerina, I at once devoted myself to the cultivation of that passion that has brought you here, and has led me to revel in the delight of your society. Ah, Zerina, you have no idea of the fervour of my devotion to you. What, you will not hear me?"

"No."

She had thrust a finger into each ear as he was speaking, and now stood looking him sullenly in the face.

"But let me tell you, child," he persisted, "that I will be heard. Put down those hands, or I will myself remove them."

She stood firm.

"You refuse?" he demanded.

A wilful nod of the head was all the answer she accorded.

Raising himself from his leaning position against the mantelpiece, he stepped forward, and grasped both the rosy wrists, one in either hand, and so wrenched the hands from her ears.

"You shall not!" she shrieked.

"But I insist. And now see how powerless you are. My grasp is the grasp of a vice—you struggle in vain in it. Ha! You may writhe and scuffle; it will not avail you. Better own that you are vanquished, and sue for mercy to the conqueror."

But she persisted in struggling violently.

"Foolish child, you distress yourself in vain," said the colonel; "but see now, I am merciful as I am strong. One kiss, and you are free!"

"Never, never!" she cried, passionately.

"You will not give it to me?"

"No."

"Then I have but one resource. See, I can take it."

His arm closed round her neck as he spoke.

A shrill, piercing scream burst from the girl's lips, ringing through the room—through the house. Again and again it was repeated. Before it had died away, the door of the room burst open, and a figure rushed towards the colonel, and laid violent hands upon him. A second figure followed.

Utter amazement caused the colonel to release his hold of his prisoner.

"Lubin, by all that's miraculous!" he exclaimed.

"Randolph!" Zerina ejaculated, joyously.

"Colonel Duplex," said Randolph—for it was he—"you will have to answer for this outrage."

"Outrage!" cried the colonel. "And, pray, what is your intention as to my house?"

"I came here to save this innocent girl."

"My guest?"

"Your victim."

"Indeed! And, pray, in what relation may she stand to you? And to your friend here? Good heaven!"—he started as he spoke, and regarded the second comer with a look of amazement—"why, as I live, Hilton Gathorne, the missing consul, by all that's felonious!"

As these words were uttered, Colonel Duplex and Edmund Harcourt stood face to face. Recognition was mutual. Harcourt's jaw dropped, and he stood paralysed with terror. Yielding to Randolph's entreaties, he had unwittingly rushed upon his fate—he had come into the presence of the man who had for years held the warrant for his apprehension on the charge of fraudulently insuring the *Khedive*, a vessel that had never existed—an offence entailing penal servitude for life.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—HARCOURT'S TREACHERY.

THE Thames was flowing bright in the morning's light. A fresh breeze, blowing landward, ruffled the water, and gave it the play and sparkle of waves. As usual there was no lack of animation about it: the liveliest river in the world was at its liveliest in that gay spring morning.

The wharves about London Bridge were crowded. Vessels were lying there in every stage of bustle and excitement; luggage enough for all London seemed to be in course of stowage in yawning holds; passengers and the friends of passengers were crowding to and fro, getting in each other's and everybody else's way, as is the habit of passengers and friends wherever shipping matters are concerned; and idlers of all kinds helped to form the crowd.

In the midst of it wandered Randolph Agnew.

Not as a mere idler. No. It was evident that he had not come down to the waterside merely to while away an hour. He had business there. That was clear from the bright, excited look in his eyes, from his flushed cheek, and the restless manner in which he went to and fro, always on the alert, always on the look-out for something which never happened.

A singular change had come over him since the overnight.

It might have been another man who had rushed upon Colonel Duplex, and commanded him to set Ze-

rina free. It might have been a younger, a fresher, a less careworn brother, more carefully attired, and with far greater repose about him, who had watched with alarm the colonel's recognition of Edmund Harcourt as the fugitive consul, scarce twelve hours ago.

What had happened in the interval that so utterly changed him? And why was he pacing the landing-stage of the French boats at an hour when, according to wonted custom, he would not yet have quitted his bed?

That it was something of moment must have been sufficiently obvious to any one who had noted his extreme restlessness. One other point might also have been gathered—namely, that he was not specially interested either in an expected vessel, or in any one of the two or three making ready for departure. Whoever he sought, he sought among the crowd. Whatever he had come to do, it was clear that its accomplishment was not connected with the river, but with its banks, for he never glanced at the bright water, or appeared to take it into the scope of his thoughts.

Thus, when there was a sudden commotion, owing to the recognition of the Boulogne boat as it steamed lazily up from among the below-bridge shipping, he only glanced once towards it, and at once turned his attention to those who were thronging down the steps on to the landing-wharves.

So it happened that the Boulogne boat came to an anchor, and the passengers began to quit it, without exciting his special attention; and his back was towards the river, when a hand was laid on his shoulder, and an exclamation caused him to start and look round.

"Marco!" burst from his lips, in a tone of astonishment.

"Yes, my boy," returned that individual, "it is your privilege to welcome me to your native shores once more."

"It were better that you had never left them," said Agnew, seriously, and so absorbed for the moment in the matter nearest his heart that he forgot the indignation at Marco's treachery which a recent conversation with Harcourt ought to have inspired in him. "And I am indeed glad to see you back again. You could not have come at a more critical moment."

"No?"

"I assure you. But how is this—you are alone?"

Marco laughed.

"That is the lamentable fact," he replied. "My lady—you have heard that I have been on my wedding trip, of course?—remains behind, or comes over in another boat. Does as she likes, anyhow."

"The lamentable fact does not appear to depress you greatly," Randolph remarked.

Marco laughed gaily.

"The fact is," he said, "we are playing a little farce, and I can afford to laugh, because it is I who will win."

He had already the appearance of a man in winning order. A complete change had come over his appearance since quitting England. There was still something of the artist about him; but not in the rough, careless, dissipated old way. His hair had been cut; his beard shorn away, so as to leave only a moustache with finely tapered points, and a tuft on the chin. He wore an olive velvet coat, a red necktie, a white waistcoat, with a gold chain over it, light trousers, and cane boots. Nay, he had even adopted gloves,

light ones—though he wore one and carried one, after the manner of those unaccustomed to such luxuries. His luggage consisted only of a small leathern bag, which he swung in his left hand.

Randolph Agnew noticed these points at a glance, but did not remark on them. Neither did he encourage Marco to enter into details touching his marriage. He was too full of the purpose which had brought him there, and too eager to inform the man of what had happened.

"Let us stand aside a little," he said—"here, where we can keep an eye on all who pass, and I will explain why your return is so opportune."

"Ah, yes, as you were saying—this is a critical moment?"

"It is so."

"For me?"

"No; for your daughter—for Zerina."

"Ah! She is in danger?"

"In the greatest."

"But my good friends, the Dormer-Pagets, to whose care I entrusted her—"

"Have grossly betrayed that trust."

"You amaze me. What has happened?"

"They have suffered Zerina to be beguiled from their house into the hands of a notorious libertine—one of the most dangerous men about town. But you, of course, know Colonel Duplex."

"I do—the villain. And is she, is my Zerina—"

"At this moment in his power."

"Impossible! You know this? You are sure of it? Oh, fool, fool that I was, to leave the darling to the care of others! And my oldest and best friends to play false to me. But, tell me, tell me how it has all happened."

In a few words, Randolph Agnew explained to him the accident which had led to the discovery of the trick played upon Zerina, and her incarceration in the house belonging to Colonel Duplex. He added that, on finding what had occurred, he had resolved to rescue the girl, for whom he had always entertained feelings of affection, and had in consequence mentioned the circumstance to his friend Harcourt, and sought his assistance.

At the mention of Harcourt's name, a strange gleam of interest came into the listener's eyes.

"Yes, yes," he said, eagerly; "and Harcourt, our good Harcourt, what was his answer?"

"At first," returned Randolph, "he was indifferent, and disposed to sneer at the folly of our mixing ourselves up in a difficulty about a stupid girl—"

"He said that? You are sure he said that?" Marco demanded, with growing interest.

"Quite sure," was the reply; "he sneered at her as not being the only girl in the world, and asked what mattered to us what became of her?"

"What mattered to you what became of her?" the other repeated, mechanically.

"Yes; but when I reminded him that I had always cared for her, that we were bound to you in many ways, and, indeed, when I put it as a mark of personal favour to myself, he assented. We found out the house, got in at a window by means of a ladder which had been conveniently left by painters in an adjoining street, and came upon the colonel and Zerina at a moment when the girl was screaming for help."

"Screaming for help? And Harcourt heard that—you are sure he heard it?"

"Quite sure; but it was I who rushed into the room—"

"You? Not Harcourt? Not our friend?"

"No. But why do you ask? Isn't it enough that we were there—"

"And that you saved her?"

"No."

"No? Is that true?" Marco asked, with a spasmodic earnestness and vehemence of gesture utterly startling. "What! Harcourt did not rescue her? He failed to release her?"

"He did."

"Good heavens! You were overpowered, then. Tell me—tell me all. I must know all."

"You shall. It is but right that you should know the worst. Think a moment, and you will understand Harcourt's position. This Colonel Duplex was the man who lost most heavily over the affair of the *Khedive*, which cost Harcourt his consulship. He it was who got out the warrant against him. He it is who holds it. And it was into his hands that he suddenly rushed at that critical moment."

"Capital!" cried Marco, clapping his hands.

Randolph looked at him in amazement.

"Do you comprehend Harcourt's danger?" he inquired.

"Ah, yes; there was his danger. True, true—I was only thinking of the dramatic force of the situation. But what followed? Harcourt's arrest, of course?"

"No. A secret interview."

"Secret?"

"Yes, to which I was not admitted. I was unceremoniously expelled the house, but I know what resulted. Harcourt was to have a fair chance of escape in consideration of his aiding, instead of opposing, the colonel in Zerina's ruin."

"And he agreed to this? Harcourt assented to these terms?"

"He did."

The Italian raised his eyes and hands in an ecstasy of delight. His hat fell from his head; the sun glowed on his black hair and his sleek features, while with great rapidity he muttered, half aloud, a few words in Latin—evidently part of a thanksgiving used in a Roman Catholic worship. The proceeding was so extraordinary that not only Randolph, but others about them, looked on in utter astonishment.

"What does this mean, Marco?" the younger man demanded. "I looked for fierce indignation and bitter invective!"

"Of course, of course," returned Marco, suddenly. "I will never forgive Harcourt, and I will see that he never forgives himself."

But he did not deign to explain the cause of his strange conduct.

"But why are you here?" he abruptly demanded.

"I have reason to believe that the colonel intends to carry off Zerina out of the country, and that at once," was the answer.

"And you think it likely that they will go by one of the boats starting from here this morning?"

"I know it was intended."

"But what could you do to prevent this?"

"Do? Surely Zerina and I would be a match for

those who might attempt to carry her on board ship against her will, here in the midst of the city. But now that you, her father, have arrived, there can be no difficulty. You have only to exert your authority, and the difficulty is at an end."

"True, my paternal authority ends all difficulty."

He said it with a chuckle. Then a strange smile spread over his face, as a ripple overspreads the face of water, and the two paced slowly up and down—Randolph lost in wonderment at the quiet, undemonstrative manner in which the other had received the news of the diabolical attempt to bear away his daughter; and Marco ruminating on—who could say what?

The bustle of the scene increased rather than diminished. The arrival of the French boat had been a trifling incident compared with the departure of a French boat, a ferry-boat, and a little tub of a steamer bound for Holland. People arriving were glad enough to identify their luggage, and make off as fast as they could. But the business of departure seemed endless, and there was so much whistling and drumming, and blowing off steam, and the rest of it, that it seemed as if neither of the three boats would ever depart.

Of course, too, the majority of the voyagers were late. And thus there was a constant hurrying to and fro; a vast deal of excited shouting and gesticulation; a rumbling of truck wheels, as they were run along heavily laden; and the usual difficulty of some one expected individual whose friends were entreating the captain that the boat might be stayed for her, and the captain protesting that he couldn't wait for the Queen of England, and waiting nevertheless; and the belated not appearing, and general consternation resulting accordingly.

During all this time the two men paced slowly up and down, exchanging few words, apparently self-absorbed; but never failing to scrutinize every new-comer, in the vague expectation that those for whom they were looking might yet appear.

But they came not. The French boat got off. The Jersey boat steamed proudly away. The noisy little Hollander ceased drumming, and (the last passenger having providentially appeared in sight at the last moment) the orders were given to cast off, and there was no sign of the colonel, of Harcourt, or Zerina.

Satisfied that their quest was in vain, the two watchers saw the boat glide a few yards from the shore, then turned to leave the wharf.

In doing so, Randolph gave one last glance at the retreating boat, and, with an exclamation, hastily called the attention of his companion to it.

On the deck stood Colonel Duplex, that moment come up from below, gracefully waving an adieu to them with his hat.

GIVING A CHARACTER.—"Do you know the prisoner, Mr. Jones?" "Yes." "What is his character?" "Didn't know he had any." "Does he live near you?" "So near that he has only spent five shillings for firewood in eight years." "Did he ever come into collision with you in any matter?" "Only once, and that was when he was drunk, and mistook me for a lamp-post." "From what you know of him, would you believe him under oath?" "That depends upon circumstances. If he was so much intoxicated that he did not know what he was doing, I would. If not, I wouldn't."

The Man in the Open Air.

THE "butterfly fishermen," as the summer anglers for coarse fish are termed, have been in their glory lately, and woe betide even the most microscopic fish that gets between the dexter finger and thumb of these zealous rodsters.

On the Trent, those who capture such tiny fry, and keep them, mayhap, in their waistcoat pockets, are called "Stockiners;" whence the derivation we know not, but nothing can be more reprehensible than such a practice, in despite of the fable of the man and the little fish.

On the Thames, this custom was suppressed for a while; but there are manifest appearances at present that it is as rife as ever—those angling clubs of the lower grade giving encouragement to this decimation of the water by allowing all alike, small and large, to be "weighed in" as make-weights in prize contests, perhaps the coveted stakes being a brass candlestick or a gridiron—both useful domestic articles, but dearly bought at the expense of the destruction of a river's valuable stock.

Those who frequent the banks of the Thames, more particularly at Kingston and Richmond, may observe groups of men and lads, some of them up to their waists in water, apparently angling; and you may wonder why they should all select one spot, and crowd together in a manner apparently more inclined to frighten fish than to catch them.

The reason of the selection of one particular locality is, that there exists a drain or sewer from the town, down which comes much upon which the fish will feed, and to obtain which they get over their usual and natural timidity. Here the fish congregate, literally in mobs, jostling each other; and they may be seen, as the water turmoils up in quitting the sewer, rolling over and over each other in their struggles to secure their favourite morsels.

Thus densely packed, the men we see do not angle for them in this filth in a legitimate manner, but with a lead-sinker and a bunch of hooks, cast and snatch this abominable tackle in the midst of the swarm, and if dexterous will secure one or more at every throw and return. This is termed "snatching"—an "art" much practised in salmon rivers, particularly in those pools in which the fish have been compelled to rest on their upward way to their breeding ground, for the want of water.

It is somewhat remarkable that, while this practice becomes more and more common in the Thames, it is met with little but talk by the authorities. It is said that the Association cannot reach the delinquents, and that the Board of the Thames Conservancy are powerless; but if the Commissioners of the Trent fisheries were enabled to suppress this pursuit, surely the Thames, yet more fenced in with special laws, ought to find a remedy.

It is not so much the fish that are actually caught by this means, as the very great number which are gashed or maimed, although the consequences which may be engendered by eating fish thus foully fed are worthy of consideration.

Trout fishing in the Thames may now be considered closed. The fly will find ample employment amongst the chub and dace—a large red palmer for the former;

a black gnat, with the point of the hook covered with a gentle, for the latter.

The chub are individually heavy this season, but are not yet in condition for the table, to which they certainly form an acceptable addition during a hard frost, when they are equal to white trout, and have been taken by connoisseurs of fish for that comparative delicacy. Gudgeons, the sport of the ladies, are remarkably plentiful this season, and finer than they have been for years past. Indeed, the Thames gudgeon is picking up its character again.

Only five years ago, in a well of forty dozen gudgeon, we could not get one of the size regulated by the bye-laws—namely, five inches in length; and the average of the whole was not an ounce in weight. Still, they were taken, and met the fate of fried fish—committee men and members of the Board of the Thames Conservancy smacking their lips over the rapid morsels and pronouncing them good. This year, however, the average is quite one ounce and a half and two ounces, or eight to the pound.

A gudgeon of a quarter of a pound is a prodigy, but we once saw four which weighed over a pound. They were from the Itchen, at Winchester.

It is the opinion of many that the restricted size of gudgeons should be reduced at least to four inches; but while no heed to the bye-laws is conceded, it matters little what size is to be found in print—the wells of the punts are stronger than Acts of Parliament, and contain more truth than blue books in general. On the other hand, the limited size of jack—twelve inches—is far too small; and, as these fish would obtain the protection of the river bailiffs, very good pike-fishing might be secured in October if greater restrictions as to size and close time for pike were enforced. As it is, all the fish are killed in June and July, before they have attained their strength and vigour, or their muscles and flesh are set into that firmness and consistency which will alone save a pike, however cooked, from the title of a coarse and tasteless fish.

Perch have fallen off greatly during the last two months; their appetites, like their persecutors, falling away during the hot months. Smelts no longer come up our river to spawn, as was their habit; the shoals of sand near Strand-on-the-Green and opposite Chiswick used to be their favourite resorts. Whether the concentrated flow of sewage from Crossness and Barking, or the deposit in their former beds, is the cause of their absence, it is difficult to say; but half-a-dozen or none at all is the yearly export now where there used to be scores of basketfuls.

Not many weeks since, while the heat was at the top of the canine tropical days, we determined only to walk after dusk, and bivouac in parks and woods, doing the vagabond in all his glory, in defiance of game watchers and the rural police, with the bench of the unpaid magistrates to boot, in awful array. Upon the occasion in question we thought ourselves dreadfully slighted by those for whom we had a great and sincere regard; so that we took with us into our solitude a burden of care and sulkiness, instead of the wallet containing the soothing pipe or the loaded pistol which blows up, but not out, one's brains.

Thus destitute, and fagged with some hours' purposeless wandering, we entered the domain of Petersham,

and, scaling the palings of Richmond Park, found ourselves at once knee-deep in the bracken which decorates in summer and mats in winter the lovely woodland glade leading to Kingston Gate. Here we threw ourselves carelessly down, "anyhow," after the fashion of the melancholy Jaques, and, like the deer and cattle we could scan in the gloom, chewed the cud of our innermost reflections, which were far bitterer, we opine, than the sweet herbs of our bedfellows.

But private wiggings are not for public ears, although it is supposed that earwigs are fond of all oracular tunnels. And this brings us to one episode in that solitary night's adventures of which there were enough to fill "a good shilling's-worth for railway reading."

Amongst the countless number of insects and creeping things which visited us during those few hours amongst the palmy fern—including moths of many kinds, dormice, field-mice, squirrels, hedgehogs, moles, rabbits and hares, and, at break of dawn, the noble stag and lovely doe, the latter coming up close to our moveless body, and sniffing and starting, making off over the hill, carrying with them the whole herd in wild confusion—there rested upon our sleeve a humble and much-despised earwig.

Had we been of the fair sex, perhaps we should have screamed, and shaken it off with loathing; but being only a vulgar man, we let it rest where its wings had brought it, and inquisitively watched its every movement.

Where its wings had brought it! Why, is it possible earwigs have wings! Oh, the nasty things! is it not enough that they can crawl, and nip you with those two ugly pincers at their tail, without having the additional means of getting up to their favourite entrance into our brain?

How irrepressible is error! Were an earwig inclined to explore the beautiful mechanism of the human ear, the would-be surveyor would be met at the very threshold of his search by an engineering difficulty of God's providence against intruders into that oracular sanctuary—namely, the slight coating of wax which is daily supplied for such purpose, however fastidious we may be in its removal.

But do earwigs really fly? Yes—see this one on our coat sleeve, it has its wings fully expanded. And what wings! They—the wings—indeed, give the name to the insect, which is properly earwing. If you look at the wing, you will be at once reminded of its close resemblance to the human ear.

Thus how easily is a prejudice refuted, and an error corrected; but you, reader, like ourselves, may live and die, and ages after there will be pens writing, as ours does now, to refute this charge against an innocent and most interesting creature—it may be, with the same thankless and useless effect.

Will you own that you had not the least idea that the earwig is furnished with wings of such remarkable size and exquisite beauty? And although it can run with comparatively greater speed than a racehorse, it is as active in the air as on foot, if not even more so.

I see there is still a doubt lingering in your mind whether this creature is actually an earwig or not; its wings—oh, thou judger by fine appearances!—altogether confounding your previous notions of the "disgusting creature."

Well, there is nothing like calling in an authority to

our aid, so let us open the Rev. J. G. Wood's "Insects at Home," at page 227, under the chapter "Dermoptera":—

"To display these wings properly is a business of exceeding difficulty, and demands the greatest patience as well as skill. They have to be coaxed from under the tiny elytra (or wing case) with infinite care, and their delicate folds spread one by one, lest they should be torn. I have found that a glass tube drawn to rather a fine point is exceedingly useful, for the wings can often be blown open by a current of air directed upon them, when the use of a needle would be nearly certain to damage them. Even when they are at last 'teased' out, it is no easy matter to spread them flat, and keep them so, while the cord braces are being pressed on them, inasmuch as the membrane, though delicate, is very elastic, and has a tendency to contract and crumple up the whole wing into folds, just as it has been nicely and satisfactorily flattened."

It will be seen, therefore, that as we lay there in the bracken, it was not inappropriate that we should think of our own hasty temper, and what good it would do us, as a course of discipline, to take an earwig or two and set their wings exactly expanded alike.

The mode in which these large and delicate wings are packed into so small a compass is wonderful.

The front margin of the wing, from the base to a spot about halfway along it, is rather hard and firm; and at that point is a broad, leathery patch which acts as a hinge. From this point the folds of the wing radiate, just like those of an open fan; and at half their length, the length of each of these folds is strengthened by a small patch of similar leathery material. When the wing is to be gathered together under the case, the radiating folds are closed, similar to the bars of a fan, and the closed folds are then doubled twice, once at the small and once at the large hinge. There are fans made thus, each of the bars having two hinges, so as to divide it into three equal parts; then, by folding it longitudinally, and then doubling it crosswise, we get it into a small compass.

Even in this we find the "discoverer," "inventor," or otherwise ingenious mechanician, anticipated by Nature, as is expressed in the true aphorism that "there is nothing new under the sun."

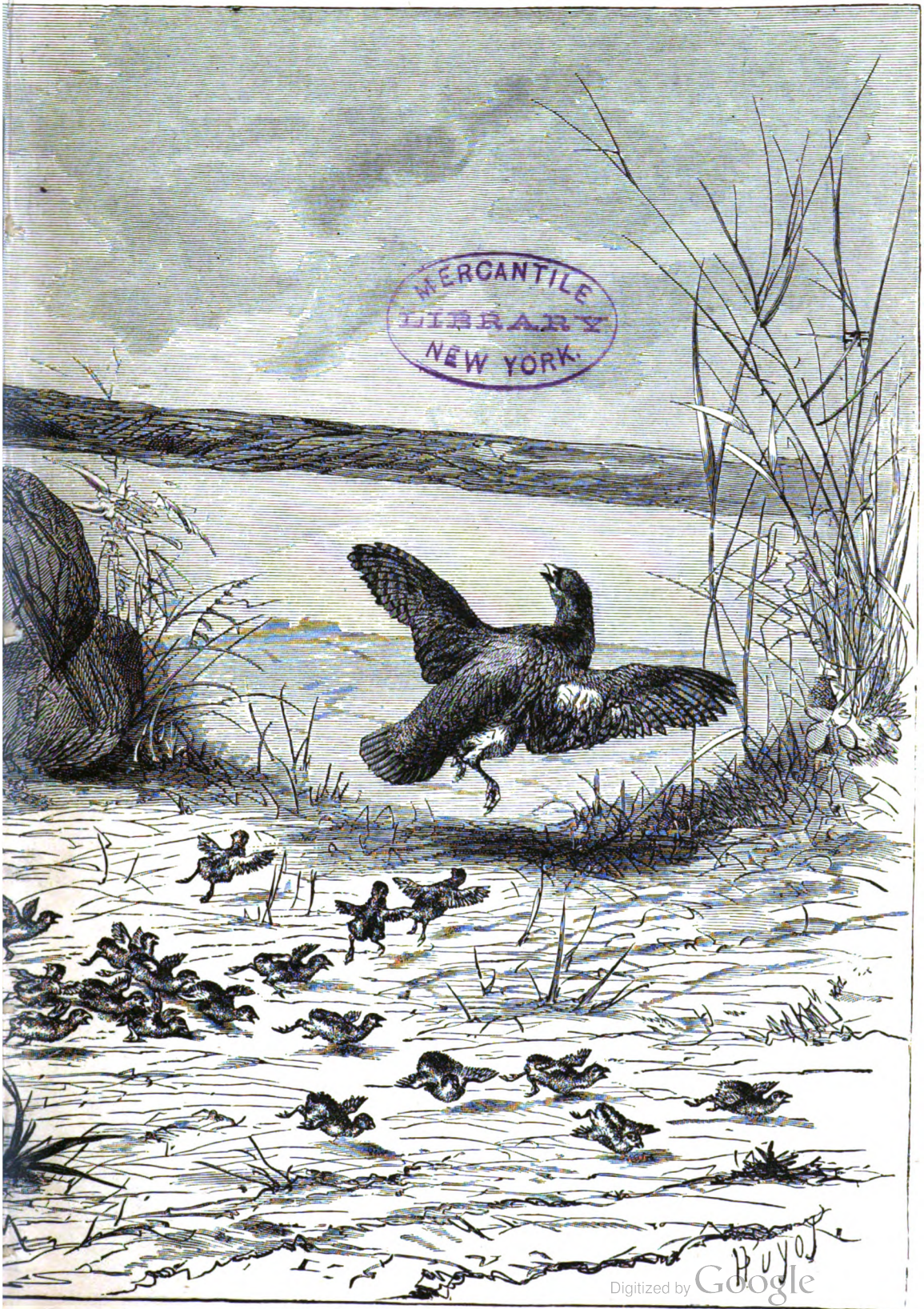
Now, as it is the greatest trial of patience to get these wings spread out from under their case, it would be simply impossible for us to attempt to put them back again. How, then, does this humble and despised creature manage to replace them, and excel proud and conceited man in an operation, to the creature, of perhaps every hour? This question involves the real use of the forceps at the end of the tail. Here, then, is another prejudice shaken; for these forceps are vulgarly considered as instruments of offence—so far true, if you first pinch their owner. Their primary use, however, is in packing the wings under the elytra, and without their aid the insect could not put these gossamer-like agents of flight in safety from rain, or, when it condescends to walk the earth, place its lovely appendages out of the dangers inseparable from the soil.

Well, have we said enough to make you think better in future of this "nasty, nasty thing"? If not, let us add that, as a rule, insects take no care of their young. They deposit their eggs in some spot where the young





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larva can find its food when hatched, and then take no further care of them.

It may be urged that bees, wasps, and ants take care of their young. This is an error. Care is certainly taken of the young larva, but not by the mother, who does nothing but deposit the eggs, leaving to the workers the task of feeding and nurturing the helpless young. But, according to De Geer, and other observant naturalists, the same sacred words might apply to the earwig as they do to the hen and her chickens; and with this Scriptural appeal to my readers, as the earwig has now packed up her costume and tumbled off our sleeve, we will rise, perhaps a more reflective, if not a better, man.

Hallo! here comes Ben, one of Mr. Salter's—the head gamekeeper—watchers, with a dogcart.

"Where to, Ben?"

"London, sir."

"Then give us a lift as far as —"

"All right, sir, jump up."

And on the way Ben told us a legend of Richmond Park, which must keep for another occasion.

Wanderings in Half-a-Guinea.

BY MAJOR MONK-LAUSEN.

CHAPTER X.—THE DESCENT.

I LET myself cautiously down to the edge of the overhanging top—for a glissade would have inevitably shot me into space—and peered over. With a very powerful pocket telescope (hands of a church clock clear at ten miles), I could make out my party on the plain immediately below me. I might have sent an avalanche right into their midst, if I had been inclined to play so dangerous a prank.

It was evident that that side must be the sheerest, and I was about to move off to that by which I had come, though I knew it was equally impracticable, when I received a buffet on the head which rolled me over in the snow, and found I was assaulted by one of the eagles.

Whether he suspected me of birds'-nesting proclivities, or thought me good to eat, I don't know; but he attacked me in a very determined manner. My rifle, which had proved a great impediment in the early part of the climb, I had sent back by my people when they gave up; so I drew my revolver, and prepared to shoot the bird through the head.

But a far better inspiration flashing into my own, I thrust the pistol back into its belt, and when the eagle swooped upon me again, I seized him by the legs, well above the talons. He could not scratch, and was too much alarmed by the unsuspected movement to peck. His only effort was to get away, and I perceived with joy that, with all his flapping, he could not raise me from the ground.

Do you guess my plan? Still holding the bird's legs, I hurried to the edge of the precipice, and launched myself into the void. The eagle's extended pinions checked my falling fast, but could not prevent my descent, which was rapid at first, and more deliberate as we fluttered into a denser atmosphere.

It would have been wiser if I had chosen a side of

the mountain which was not so precipitous all the way down to start from, as in ten minutes' time my arms began to ache consumedly, and yet I could not let go without being dashed to pieces. However, I managed to throw my legs over the bird's talons, and so obtained relief, until I could recognize the faces of my men directly below me. They also saw the eagle, and scattered in all directions, wondering what was coming upon them, and I perceived Tulu getting his gun ready.

"Don't shoot!" I cried.

Whereupon Tulu dropped the piece, and fell flat on his face, thinking that the voice came from the bird. In three minutes more I was only as many feet from the ground, when I let go, and alighted safely. The bird, thus suddenly released, turned over and over, evidently dazed and confused; but, presently recovering himself, sailed away, and perched on a rock, doubtless to think over his late experiences before going home.

That my fellows were astonished when they found me standing quietly in the midst of them, you may well imagine. They had that confidence in me that they felt certain of my return, but not in that particular manner.

The only thing now was to get back to the encampment as fast as possible, which was not so rapidly as we came; for we were all in a terrible pickle, I naturally being by far the worst—the exposed portions of my body being almost entirely devoid of skin, while I was quite light-headed from fatigue and want of sleep.

Of the march back, therefore, I have no distinct recollection, except a vague sense of pain and thirst, for our gourd gave out long before we arrived at the camp, where Peter Tromp welcomed me very heartily.

He had a capital meal ready, to which I did justice; but my great desire was for sleep, so, as the insects of all kinds tormented me fearfully in my flayed and abraded condition, I told off Atah, Piti, his wife, and the three men under his charge, to fan me continually while I had my nap out, which was done.

It lasted for fifty-six hours, and then I awoke quite renovated, and hungry enough to eat a crocodile.

But though there was sufficient food to provide me with a breakfast, it was nearly all there was; the essence had been used up; and, as I had not been out hunting for so many days, the larder was quite unprovided.

When I asked why no one had been out to replenish it while I slept, the ready reply was that they feared lest they should scare the game without securing any, and thought it best to wait till the milder of unerring aim should have finished his nap, which they had no precedent for supposing would last so long.

But Peter Tromp privately informed me that the whole party had celebrated my successful ascent and wonderful descent of the Asor in such copious draughts of palm wine, that the best shots among them had most excellent reasons for mistrusting the accuracy of their aim.

However that might be, it was evidently urgent to obtain meat at once, so I shouldered my rifle, and started in search of it.

CHAPTER XI.—THE TOGA TREE.

I HAD not gone twenty yards from the camp before a loud clattering of wings in the bushes before me made me cock my piece, and look out sharp.

The flapping continued, but no bird got up, which surprised me very much, until a fine ostrich emerged from the scrub, and went scuttling away across the plain, as if she had seven-league boots on.

I could easily have shot her, but there was no market for the feathers, I doubted the succulency of her flesh, and I never destroy any creature for the mere sake of sport, unless it is noxious.

Going to the spot from which I had flushed her, I found a snug sort of tunnel or arbour in the scrub, at the farther end of which was the ostrich's nest. Not that it was like a nest in the ordinary sense of the term, being merely a mound of twigs and fragrant grasses; but I knew what it was by a large and beautiful egg which lay upon it.

Raising this delicacy with both hands, I held it between my eyes and the sun, when I could see through the semi-transparent shell that it was fresh; and, as the camp was so close, I carried it back in triumph, intending to place it at once in the hands of Peter Tromp. But seeing that he was settling himself down for a *siesta*, the spirit of mischief suggested a harmless practical joke to my mind, and, concealing my prize amongst the baggage, I went up to the honest Dutchman, and told him I had lit by accident upon the snuggest spot for an afternoon nap imaginable, and was almost tempted to take advantage of it myself; but as it was absolutely necessary that I should go hunting, to procure a supply of meat for the party, I would show the place to him.

Peter picked himself up, and followed me to the shady retreat, with which he was charmed; and I left him making his arrangements for a good undisturbed afternoon's rest, till my return with game should set his culinary talents to work.

I called Tata, whose turn it was to accompany me, and started off, chuckling to think how astonished the honest Dutchman would be when the ostrich came home; and how surprised, on the other hand, the bird would be to see what had been hatched in her absence. I think Tata entered into the joke, for I caught him grinning from ear to ear.

My hunt had a definite object; for by the aid of my pocket telescope, used from the top of a betel-nut tree, I had made out a large herd of buffalo on the plain, about three miles off, in a nor'-westerly direction. I had also perceived that several pairs of bulls were engaged in butting one another, like the war ships of the future, which looked as if domestic matters were in process of arrangement; and their attention might, therefore, be too much engrossed to notice a sportsman who advanced with due care.

There being a slight breeze from the south, however, it was necessary to make a *détour*; for no amount of mental abstraction would prevent a sentinel buffalo from smelling the sweetest human being who came towards him with the wind. When we were well to leeward of the herd, however, the stalk was easy enough, for the grass was never less than three feet high, while in many places it rose to six and seven; in the latter case we could walk erect, with as much rapidity as the obstruction of the long grass, and the desirability of allowing the snakes time to get out of the way, would permit.

And here I must say, in defence of these much-detested reptiles, that they never evince the slightest de-

sire to be trodden upon. On the contrary, I have walked thousands of miles in my time over ground where they were gliding away, as now, to right and left, with one continuous rustle, and can count on my fingers the times when I have been in serious peril from setting my foot upon them unawares. When the grass was shorter we had to stoop, but did not get on much more slowly.

On reaching within one hundred and fifty yards of the herd, the cover ceased. What with their eating up and trampling down the grass, there was no more concealment to be had in it beyond that point than in an English meadow. However, I was near enough for an effective shot, and stood upright, to select a good fat victim. But the herd, which had been facing away from my position, had now turned round, and stood for a moment with their heads towards me—the most unfavourable position for a shot possible.

I stood ready, waiting for one of them to turn sideways, when I heard a terrific roar, and a moolah sprang out of the grass on the opposite side of the herd, and struck one of the buffaloes to the ground. The remainder lowered their heads, and charged full down upon us. Tata levelled his piece, and fired at the first bull, steadily and with good aim, the bullet striking the animal in the centre of the forehead, where it was flattened out into a thin leaden plate, and stuck, without checking his career for a moment.

Tata then turned and ran for it, being extremely fleet of foot.

Experience in Mexico, where I was considered a pretty bullfighter for an amateur, had taught me, however, that there was a safer way of dealing with the animal.

I waited his approach with a firm foot; and when, exasperated by the shot, he made direct at me, I leapt lightly up, allowed his head to pass between my legs, and came down neatly astride on his back—with my face to the tail, indeed; but, as my mount led the herd, this was an advantage, enabling me to select the best beast of the lot at my leisure.

The bull I rode being handicapped with my weight, the others began presently to draw up with him, and I soon had a good shoulder shot offered to me. But I perceived, just in time, that we were all racing in the direction of the camp, and the longer we delayed the shorter would be the distance to carry the meat home.

Soon, however, one and another passed, and we were falling back into the centre of the main body; so I dropped a couple of buffaloes right and left, and then, slewing myself round with my face the proper way, perceived that I had almost waited too long for poor Tata—whom, to tell the truth, I had quite forgotten—as the beast I was riding was within a couple of yards of him, and the lad showed evident signs of distress.

Drawing my knife, therefore, I placed the point carefully on exactly the right matador spot, and thrust it into the spine. Lightning could not inflict a more instantaneous death, and if ever there were a case of euthanasia, that buffalo enjoyed it.

The bull who dies at the moment he expects to toss somebody is blest indeed!

The worst of it was that he was going so fast, and stopped so suddenly, that I was shot a good twenty yards over his head. However, dear old Tom Moody taught me as a lad how to fall soft, and I took no

damage; and if I was shaken at all I did not feel it, on perceiving that I had alighted on the folds of a black snake that was curled up asleep.

It gave me a turn, but there was no danger, for the reptile was smashed to a *purle*.

Tata picked up my knife, rifle, G. B. D. pipe, and hat, which had spun away in my somersault, and brought them to me; and when he had recovered his breath, for he had had a good run, we returned to camp, which was not far off, and I sent men out, under Tata's guidance, to bring in the beef. That done, I remembered Peter Tromp, and went to see how he was getting on.

Judge my surprise when, on approaching the arbour, as I call it, cautiously, I saw that both he and the ostrich were at home. Creeping nearer, I then perceived that Peter's head was pillowed on the nest, and that the ostrich was sitting on it!

The roar of laughter which this spectacle elicited from me disturbed both bird and man. The former once more scuttled away; the latter sat up, and remarked that it was very close, and he had dreamed that he was being suffocated in a feather bed—which was not very far from the fact.

The matter is easily explained.

Peter, not knowing that the heap of fragrant grass was a nest, and finding it a comfortable pillow, had covered up his body, and settled himself down for a snooze. In his sleep, he had turned on his face, and the ostrich, coming home, had taken his bald, shining pate for her egg, which she had left in that place, and naturally proceeded to her task of incubation.

What a difference, I may here remark, between this simple anecdote and those extravagant stories about ostriches hiding their heads in the sand, and fancying themselves invisible, which have been told by travellers destitute of my regard for veracity.

I had intended pursuing my journey that very day, since, now that I had made the ascent of Mount Asor, there was nothing to detain me in our present encampment—the country in the immediate neighbourhood having been thoroughly explored. But the hardships attending that ascent, followed so closely by the heavy purl I got from the buffalo, brought on a slight attack of dysomania, and I thought it prudent to remain for a day or two where I was, and put the still into operation, for the production of the elixir which has been before alluded to—and a copious administration of which gave me so much relief, by providing the stimulus which my constitution needed, that I was soon ready and anxious for a fresh start.

We crossed part of the plain which had been already traversed by the expedition to Asor, and leaving that mountain on the left, we journeyed for several days across an open country, where game was somewhat scarce; and nothing worth recording occurred till we once more reached a forest.

In this wood there was the most curious tree I ever remember to have seen. It stood alone; the nearest tree to it showing a dwarfed and withered aspect, as though there were something injurious to vegetation about it. It had no leaves, but a sort of spine, like a fir, and this was confined to a tuft of branches near the top, at least ninety feet from the ground. At the extreme summit there was a cone, which rose up straight like the spear-head on the top of a flagstaff.

"Oh," said Booboo to Atah, "if my milor could only get that cone, what a beautiful tent he would have!"

As by this time I knew Poopooan as well as I did Persian or Arabic, I turned and asked Booboo what he meant.

He replied that the object in question (which was very rare, since there were but a few trees of the sort in the island, each of which had but one cone in five generations of men) was composed of a thin, light, tough skin, which might be peeled off in one piece, large enough to cover a pond which was near us.

As this pond was a quarter of a mile across, I took this as a mere general expression of width.

He had never himself seen a whole cone close, but the chief of his clan had a tent of the material, which protected himself and his wife at night when he was on a hunting expedition, and which had been taken from him by the Kralls.

I suggested that Booboo should climb the tree, and throw the cone down; but he replied that it was impossible. The surface of the trunk was so smooth and slippery that no lizard could run up it, while the girth was too great to ascend by means of a loop passed round it and the climber's body, even if the surface were not too slippery to afford the necessary holding for his feet.

An investigation of the tree proved to me that he was right; the surface had no inequality, and was more slippery than glass.

"Why not cut it down, then?"

"Too hard," said Booboo, shaking his head.

I took an axe and tried, but Booboo was right. Mr. Gladstone himself could not have made any impression on it, and the axe's head was shattered into twenty pieces.

"Bah! I will shoot it down," said I.

"Truly, milor is a wonderful shot," observed Booboo, modestly; "but he must cut the stalk. If he hits the cone itself, the skin will be spoiled."

This sensible observation made me reflect, as the slender stalk was barely perceptible from where I stood.

I soon formed my plan, however; taking some copper wire and a pair of pincers, I made a strong chain, more than two yards long, each end of which I fixed firmly into the apex of a bullet. Then I rammed each bullet carefully into my rifle—one down the right-hand barrel, one down the left, leaving about an inch of the connecting chain hanging out of the muzzles.

Taking careful aim three inches below the cone, I pressed both triggers simultaneously, and, to my delight, the coveted object came tumbling to the earth uninjured, with the stalk alone neatly severed.

On examination, Booboo's description was found sufficiently accurate.

The vegetable, which did not weigh more than ten pounds, was composed of a silk-like substance, thin as goldbeaters' skin, tough as gutta-percha, which peeled off with ease in one continuous fold, and provided clothing and tents for the entire party.

A piece five yards square was given to each; in the day-time it was draped over the body, or wound round the waist, according to the taste or convenience of the wearer.

When the hour for rest arrived, each man beat out a piece of ground, to free it from insects or reptiles, spread the silk over the surface, and crept under it, with a short,

stout staff in his hand; raising this, he found himself in a tent which resisted the night dew, kept off rain, admitted the air freely, and into which no mosquito could enter.

The comfort I derived from this happy discovery, during the remainder of my expedition, is perfectly indescribable.

Bow-street Runners.

THE London police was remodelled by Mr. (afterwards Sir Robert) Peel, and commenced duty on September 29, 1829. Previous to this time the duty of apprehending criminals devolved upon constables, who were called "Bow-street runners," many of whom showed great ingenuity in detecting the perpetrators of offences, and of which Professor Prynne, in his interesting "Recollections," gives the following illustrative anecdotes:—

"A friend of mine, a barrister, told me that he had the following relation from Townshend, who was one of the most noted among them. A robbery was committed at a country house in Essex, and one of these men (I think it was Townshend himself) was sent for. He detected on the drive near the house a little hay, which convinced him that a hackney coach had been there. He went to the nearest turnpike, and asked if one had passed through it about such a time. The man said 'Yes,' but could not remember the number.

"'It was 45,' said a boy at play near; 'I'm certain of it, for I shouted as it passed, Wilkes and Liberty.'

"The runner immediately returned to town, found out No. 45, and summoned the driver of it before a magistrate. The man acknowledged that he had been out of town, but asserted that it was elsewhere he had gone. The magistrate said, 'Turn down his sleeves,' knowing the custom of these men to place the turnpike tickets there, and that there was just the chance that he might not have given up the one that freed him back. It was so, and the ticket proved to be for the Essex route. The man peached and the robbers were taken.

"The same friend told me another curious anecdote of the ingenuity of these detectives of former days. A friend of his was invited one evening to meet McManus, who had gone down to the North on business, and from his own lips he had the following recital:—

"He (McManus) was sent for to inspect a house which had been entered by burglars. After careful examination of the locks, he pronounced that it was so cleverly done that it could only have been effected by one of three or four men who were skilled in such work. Thereupon he returned to town, and visited one of the houses where thieves resort. Entering into conversation with those he found there, he asked, casually—

"'Where's such a man?' and 'I don't see —'

"And presently it came out that one man whom he knew by name had not been seen since the day of the robbery. His next step was to visit the different coach offices, and after some inquiries made in vain, he at last discovered that a man like the one in question had gone down with luggage to Oxford the day after the robbery. He took his place for the next day, and when arrived at Oxford set about tracing him in this way. He dressed himself very shabbily, and visited

the different little inns in the outskirts of the town, saying at each—

"'I want a pot of beer for—' naming the man he wished to find.

"He was met with—

"'We don't know such a person here.'

"To which he replied—

"'Oh! it's a mistake, then, no matter.'

"And so on, till at last the answer was—

"'We'll send it.'

"'No,' says he, 'that won't do, he's in a hurry, and I'm to go with you.'

"He went, and found his man, and some of the stolen property in his possession."

Fagging at Westminster Sixty Years Ago.

THE fagging system was then in full vogue. My first fag master—I have reasons for suppressing his name, for though a kinsman of my own, he was 'less than kind'—was a good-looking fellow, who left Westminster for the Peninsula, and served afterwards at Waterloo. For the edification of a more luxurious and less oppressed generation of fags, let me give a sample of a day's work during this my period of servitude.

"I rose as the day broke, hurried on my clothes, brushed those of my master, cleaned several pairs of his shoes, went to the pump in Great Dean's-yard for hard water for his teeth, and to the cistern at Mother Grant's for soft water for his hands and face, passed the rest of the time till eight in my own hasty ablutions, or in conning over my morning school lesson. Eight to nine: In school. Nine to ten: Out for my breakfast, or rather for my master's breakfast—I had to bring up his tea things, to make his toast, &c.—my own meal was a very hasty affair. Ten to twelve: In school. Twelve to one: In the usher's correcting room preparing for afternoon lessons. One to two: Dinner in the hall (a sort of roll call), absence a punishable offence, the food execrable. Two to five: Evening school. Five to six: Buying bread, butter, milk, and eggs for the great man's tea, and preparing that meal. Six to the following morning: Locked up at Mother Grant's till bed-time; fagging of a miscellaneous character.

"I had borne this description of drudgery for about a fortnight, when, without weighing the consequences—remember, reader, I was not nine years old—I determined to strike work. Instead, therefore, of preparing tea as usual, I slipped behind one of the maids into the coal-cellar, and there lay *perdu* for a couple of hours.

"I was at length dragged out of my hiding-place, and handed over to the fury of my tea-less master. He made me stand at attention, with my little fingers on the seams of my trousers, like a soldier at drill. He then felled me to the ground by a swinging buck-horse (a blow on the cheek with the open hand) on my right cheek. I rose up stupefied, and was made to resume my former position, and received a second flogging.

"I know not how often I underwent this ordeal, but I remember going to bed with a racking headache, and being unable to put in an appearance at school next morning."—*Lord Albemarle's Recollections.*

The Egotist's Note-book.

IT'S as well that the English people, who are holding meetings everywhere to condemn the Turkish atrocities, should understand what sort of notion the *protégés* of Lord Beaconsfield have of themselves. The *Vakit*, one of the leading Turkish journals, warns England that if she abandons the Ottoman Empire the Mussulmans will know what to do. They will lay aside all the European customs they have lately adopted, and enter upon their "old way." The whole of the Mussulman race, from the boy of thirteen to the old man of seventy-five, will be armed; proclamations will be issued, and war will be declared against the whole world. What the "whole world" might think of this Ishmaelitic threat, I cannot say; but one might be tempted to ask the *Vakit* whether the recent horrible outrages in Bulgaria are one of the "European customs" which the Turks have "lately adopted."

I fear that Mr. Gladstone, Mr. John Bright, Earl Russell, the Bishop of Manchester, and the other eminent personages who have been penning letters on the subject of our relations with the Ottoman Empire will have to write a great many more before they bring Lord Beaconsfield to their way of thinking; but if the electors of Bucks were to return Mr. Carington, distinctly as a protest against the Eastern policy of the Government, we should witness a change of front on the part of the noble Earl as sudden and complete as any of which Vivian Grey was ever guilty.

If one did not take the advice of Artemus Ward—"Don't prophecy unless you know"—it would be a tempting opportunity to begin forecasting the probable length of reign of the new Sultan Abdul Hamid. The task would be easy, and would resolve itself into an arithmetical calculation, in which the Sultans who had been bowstrung, stabbed, and otherwise put out of the world, might be averaged with the gentlemen who had been allowed to die quietly in their beds, and the result taken according to Colenso or Barnard Smith. The Moslems seem very happy in their choice of the rulers of their land!

Rumour is busy with statements about a change in our ambassador at Constantinople. One cannot help thinking that such a change would be desirable, for Sir Henry Elliot has not done much to establish the English name as being always associated with humanity and the defence of the oppressed.

The *Spectator* has printed such a noble poem, *apropos* of Mr. Disraeli's policy and the Bulgarian question, that, seeing the object in view, no excuse should be needed for reproducing it here:—

IS SELFISHNESS POLICY?

["Our duty at this critical moment is to maintain the Empire of England."—*Speech of Mr. DISRAELI, August 11, 1876.*]

England speaks and Europe listens—what doth England say?

From the very shrine of Freedom comes a voice to-day—

Comes a voice from Christian England, bids them spare or slay.

Is it death, or is it life! What doth England say?

"Shall a brother help a brother, if the waves run high? Shall a nation save a nation, if it lose thereby?

Keep the peace, endure oppression, trade and gather pelf,

England's mission—(hear it, Heaven!)—is to save herself!"

Hath he said, and shall the world say, "This is England's choice!"

Nay, but this is the supplanter, this is Jacob's voice. Shall he rob us of our birthright, right to free the slave, Right to comfort the afflicted, right to hear and save?

Shall the Danube hurry seawards, red with Christian blood,

Outraged maids and ripped-up mothers rolling down the flood?

Shall the savage lust of Islam hold its revel there, And the putrid breath of corpses lade the sluggish air!

Oh, for Milton's rolling thunder, Cromwell's fiery zeal for God;

Then should England rise to vengeance, tread the path that once she trod.

Once again for sacred freedom should her hosts go forth to fight,

And the battle-cry of England should be, "God defend the right!"

The Anglo-Indian papers are very angry with the Viceroy for his minute concerning the magistrates who tried Mr. Fuller for assaulting his syce. But Mr. Fuller's own account of the affair fully justifies the action of Lord Lytton. Mr. Fuller, after stating that his syce had been insolent, and had a drowsy appearance, says:—"This naturally irritated me, and, with my gloved and unclosed hand, I struck him a couple of slaps over the face and head; he thereupon became more insolent, when, with a view to abate the nuisance, I clutched at the blanket on his head, but found I had seized his hair. I gave this a slight twitch, and the man either fell or sat on the ground." The man died shortly afterwards. Would Mr. Fuller, had he been in England, have dared to slap his servant on the face for being insolent, or twitched his hair, in order to "abate the nuisance"? The sooner men like Mr. Fuller are taught that even the natives of India are human beings, the better it will be for the interests of the Empire—to say nothing of the interests of humanity.

Hospital Sunday does not seem to be quite so successful as of old, to judge from the newspaper accounts. It is a pity, too; for these institutions need funds; and it really is the duty of those who may at any time need hospital assistance to give aid in their turn. It is not much that is asked. If every poor man in London gave but a penny, what a nice little addition would be made. Or say that every beer drinker deprived himself of the price of one pot! Will he? I'm afraid not.

The campanologists of Bray have been signaling themselves during the vicar's absence by a strike. The consequence is that the bells ceased to give tongue. "No rise, no chimes," said the bellringers; and no matter what was on, they refused to set the bells a-ringing.

The churchwardens, however, seem to have been men of parts; for, setting their wits to work how to get over the difficulty, they hit upon a set of hammers. These were affixed to the bells, and the chiming goes on without the aid of the bob major and grandsire cater men. It is a pity that chiming hammers cannot be applied to produce harmony in some of our other strikes.

When a certain king in Scripture history was maddened with his troubles, the playing of a harp soothed him. Would not the same or a similar plan be useful in dealing with a certain mad king, now in a sable rage in the land of Dahomey? Say we sent him the Moore and Burgess party to sing to him, and bring him round. On this occasion, they might be prevailed upon to perform out of London.

A notice in a daily paper says that the hops in the Hereford district are free from mould, and that more will be grown than was anticipated. Now, at first sight, this looks as if they had been uprooted, and the wonder was how they were to grow, not being aerial-rooted plants. Well, it is a good thing that they are free from mildew, as much for the sake of the poor pickers as the growers, and those who turn them into beer. Would, though, that the bitter hop might prevail more freely, instead of the drug bitter that pervades our ales; for when a brewer is advertised now for by a large firm, he is required to be a good chemist.

The Keighley guardians, now in prison in York Castle, seem to be having what boys call a "lark." They are prisoners, but they will not submit to the rules; for they have seized the opportunity of a little laxity being exercised towards them of indulging in smoking, and, when put upon their *parole d'honneur* respecting tobacco, have deliberately fibbed, and said that they had none. They have, however, been fined, and now know that even an opponent of vaccination must not vapour in prison.

I see that a Berkshire farmer has been playing the part of a noodle, by doing in one day as much work in loading wheat as an ordinary labourer would perform in three days. Well, he has done it—and what then? How can men be such senseless asses as to over-exert themselves to a degree which entails the risk of life-long suffering? And for what? Merely to show that they can do more than others. If some great purpose were in view, the saving of life or limb, the act becomes grand; but these superhuman efforts for the sake of a paltry wage ought to be condemned.

I note a very amusing article in the *Daily News* respecting the French as artists, and the prize-giving meeting. The following remarks about the sufferings in the crowd may well excite a smile, especially those relating to the tobacco-loving dame:—"I noticed that there was on all sides a free use of elbows and shoulders, utterly destructive of any millinery that stood in their way. 'Oh, monsieur, ma robe!' 'Ah, mon Dieu, mon chapeau!' were the most frequent of the sounds we heard for nearly a quarter of an hour; and one old lady, who had lived all her life in the Rue Jacob, screamed out, in a voice of fearful shrillness, 'Bonté divine, v'la ma pipe qui s'en va maintenant.'"

A writer in a contemporary makes rather a conical mistake *apropos* of ice. He says:—"Much of the ice which is sold, although apparently clear as crystal, is only dirty water frozen, and much that has come under the notice of Dr. Whitmore, the medical officer of health, has been found to contain a considerable amount of sediment, apparently of vegetable matter. It is satisfactory to learn that this is not the case with ice imported from the fiords or lakes of Norway, in which the water is usually very pure; but what guarantee have the public that much of the ice they use is not impure? Dr. Whitmore suggests the melting of a little in a wine glass, when, if the water it produces is dirty, the ice is clearly bad. Undoubtedly, when ice is used in its natural form, this test is simple and effective; but, then, ice is consumed daily in numerous other forms, such as ice cream, which renders it impossible to tell whether it is clean or dirty." If my friend will refer to the article "Seasonable Advice," he will find that he and the world at large may eat their ices as they please—warm if they like, according to the song—but in perfect peace as to their composition. Ice, clean or dirty, does not enter into the making; it is only used, and generally the roughest and dirtiest that can be obtained, outside the freezing cylinders, to produce when mixed with salt a sufficiently low temperature to solidify the manufactured cream.

The *Gardener's Chronicle* discourses very amusingly about the stringency of the laws which the anti-vivisectionists would foster. It says:—"As for the gardeners, there must be no smoking of houses, no catching of slugs and snails, no trapping of wood-lice, weevils, or earwigs; green-fly, scale, and thrips must be allowed to enjoy their lives unmolested. Indeed, as it is quite impossible to draw the line between the different manifestations of life, animal or vegetable, we may next expect to hear it gravely proposed to be made a punishable offence to cut a cabbage—certainly to prune a peach tree or pollard a willow." The medical gentlemen who waited on Mr. Cross recently seem quite of this way of thinking.

A frightful instrument has just been advertised for sale, in the shape of a powerful double ear trumpet, as announced in one of the newspaper columns. Of course this is meant for the deaf, with whose misfortune one must condole; but "a powerful double-ear trumpet" does call up visions of such terrible crooked and valved brass serpent-like creatures, with bell mouths, that, sooner than see them used, one would prefer to shout through double hands all that one wished to say.

THE season has arrived when every one is thinking of turning from the sultriness of town life to the pleasures of a country tour. Ladies who take very little exercise when at home, with true British courage often undertake long and tedious journeys. It is of the highest importance, under such circumstances, that the clothing should in no way impede the proper circulation of the blood, but especially should the old but bad practice of gartering the leg be avoided. Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London, has provided the only means of remedying this in his New Patent Stocking Suspender, which he will send by post for 2d. extra. The prices are—Children's, 1s. 6d.; maids', 2s.; ladies', 3s. Our advice is to write at once for a pair.

McCausland's Shoot.

MIXED SHOOTING.—A gentleman, residing in Rutlandshire, where he has the shooting over 3,000 acres, will be glad of a COMPANION to join him for a month, or longer period, and pay something towards expenses. Board and lodging provided. Particulars sent.—Address Trigger, Post-office, Wastlands, Rutlandshire.

I HAD been looking up and down the advertisement columns of the *Field* till my neck began to ache, when the above offer caught my attention, and fixed my head. I suppose that the idea of becoming domesticated with an entire stranger would be anything but attractive to the majority of Englishmen; but then everybody was a stranger to me. A kitten wandering by mistake into an empty house could hardly feel more isolated than I did as I sat in the smoking-room of the Tavistock, that hot Saturday in August, with the voluminous country gentleman's paper in my hands.

It is not probable that my antecedents are of the slightest importance to anybody; but, as a great many people will be inclined to jump to the conclusion that, even in the month of August, a man without an acquaintance in London must have committed a crime, I should like, for my own satisfaction, to explain my position.

Six years before, I had just left school, and was hesitating between the law, the army, and the church, when I got the offer of an appointment in a hot colony; and as it was rather a good thing, good pay—out of which I could save, and the prospect of a pension if one's constitution resisted the climate for twenty years—I accepted it.

There was hardly any recreation, and very little society, in the station where my lot was cast. The work, though not hard exactly, kept me tightly to my post, with its unvarying routine. The climate was healthy for a tropical country, but still somewhat trying to the livers of carnivorous residents; and altogether, at the end of six years, both mind and body demanded a change; and a holiday being now due to me, without injury to my prospects, I took advantage of it, and came to England, arriving in London at the end of the season, just when all the fashionable people were going out of it; though you may well imagine that a few thousands more or less made no difference to me in that bewildering crowd.

I had been expatriated too young to have had time to form lasting ties. I was not a member of either university; I belonged to no club; my parents were both dead. Yet I was unlucky in finding myself so utterly friendless, too. I possessed an aunt, with a gouty but hospitable husband, and a covey of nice cousins; but they had gone to drink the waters of some Spanish spa. I had a sister, who was married to a civil engineer; but he was making a railway in Russia, and she had joined him. My brother, Dick, I thought I should see, as his regiment was quartered in Ireland. But he had got a staff appointment, and gone out to India.

All this I learned after my arrival. Yet, at first, I was anything but dull. In default of persons I took refuge in places and things, and when I found a river, a tree, or a steeple in its old place, I took it quite as a personal favour, and glowed. And then, I am very fond of theatrical entertainments, a taste which had not been gratified for six years, so that I had arrears to

pull up; and the characters of a comedy, being quite real to me, were sufficient company all the evening.

But after a few weeks I could have passed a good examination in every play, worthy to be called such, performing in London; and this resource was fast failing me. The shooting season was also coming on, and that made me restless. The happiest days of my boyhood that I could remember were those very rare ones which I had spent in stubble or turnips, or by the woodside, with a gun in my hand. I had longed to grow up, that I might indulge in field sports freely, little dreaming that the impediments to the satisfaction of our tastes and fancies generally grow the more formidable as years pass by.

With the exception of an annual slaughter of quail, when the weary birds touched our island in their passage, I had been entirely deprived of sport in the country where I was obliged to live, and this quail shooting was poor fun. The native boys could knock them over with sticks and stones, so numerous and so tired were they.

But I had hoped to get some shooting during my leave, especially as my brother Dick had written me a glowing account of the sport he was enjoying in Ireland the autumn before, expressing a hope that I should share it with him the following season. Had he known I was coming for certain, he would have sent me letters of introduction to some of his brother officers; but I had not made up my mind till the last moment.

Left entirely to my own resources, it occurred to me that money could buy everything—except, perhaps, common sense; and as country air and exercise was part of the programme for the due re-establishment of my health, I felt justified in paying pretty high for some shooting, if I could get it. And that was how I came to be studying the advertisement columns of the *Field* so carefully, while the remembrance of my solitary and friendless condition may qualify your contempt for the greenness which could find attraction in the particular paragraph which arrested my attention.

Without expecting much to come of it, I determined to write to "Trigger," stating fairly who I was, how I was situated, and my reasons for answering the advertisement. On the Wednesday following, I received this epistle:—

"MY DEAR SIR—Thank you for telling me at once who you are, because that saves trouble. I am lucky in a square man having been the first to offer to deal. Of course, you are just the sort I had in my eye when I advertised; only I hope you are not a teetotaller, for I hate them. I like a fellow who will share a social glass—in moderation, of course—of an evening, when the sport of the day is over. So if you are a teetotaller, or object to the smell of tobacco, we need not go any farther—we shall not suit.

"As you have been frank, so will I. My father was in trade, and invested his money in a mortgage. The owner of the land could not pay, so he foreclosed; and that is how I came to be the owner of this estate. The county people have not called upon me, and I get tired of only having my keeper for company; so I thought I would try this advertisement plan. There is a fair show of birds for September. I have some woods fairly stocked with pheasants against October. Later on, there are a few woodcock; and when the frost sets in, we get some snipe. There are also rather more

hares and rabbits on the place than I like, as I farm a good part of it myself.

"I shall charge you twenty pounds a month; or, if you are not comfortable, you can pay five pounds at the end of the first week, and go. But come down first, and see if you like your accommodation. I have a room quite ready for you.—Yours faithfully,

"PHILIP MCCAUSLAND."

A man could not speak fairer than that, it seemed to me; and I determined to have a week's trial, at any rate.

What made me most suspicious was the price. Surely, either the shooting or the accommodation must be very inferior, or he would have asked double, at the very least. If, however, he really wanted a companion rather than pecuniary profit, and thought from my letter that I was likely to suit him, he would be inclined to offer me a good bargain. Having written to say that I would come for the first week in September, at all events, my next business was to buy a gun; so I selected the newest thing in central-fire breechloaders I could procure, and, having ordered a supply of cartridges sufficient to stock Leadenhall Market, supposing each one to account for a bird, I started on the morning of the 31st of August for Rutlandshire, and was deposited at a small and desolate-looking station early in the afternoon.

There were two vehicles waiting for the train, a light van and a well-appointed dogcart, which I could see as we approached; and when I got out I was at once accosted by a somewhat short and thickset gentleman, whose age I guessed at about thirty-five, whose face was ruddy, whose manners were somewhat painfully shy, and who said that his name was McCausland. As I was the only passenger who alighted, he could not well be mistaken in his man; and yet he was evidently relieved when he found there was no error.

My luggage, together with some packages which had come from London for McCausland, including a basket of fish and a large block of ice, were placed in the light van. I mounted the dogcart; McCausland seated himself beside me, and took the reins; the groom let go of the horse's head, and away we went, at a trot fast enough to please an American.

"It's only a ten-mile drive," said Mr. McCausland, when I had made sufficient conversation about the weather, the crops, &c., to set him at his ease; "and I do it within the hour."

"You find the railway very convenient, I suppose?" I originally remarked.

"Very, very. I always have something to meet this train, for my fish comes down by it for dinner."

"Every day?"

"Yes. I don't like dining without fish. I used to have to dine without fish on Sunday and Monday, till I found out a dodge."

"Ah, what was that?"

"Skate. Skate improves by keeping. I have some down every Saturday with that day's fish, and we curry it. Do you like curried skate?"

Now, this prospect was pleasing, so far as it went. If a man who only touched civilization at a point ten miles off had fish for dinner every day, he probably kept a good table.

"This is where my 'shoot' begins, on the north,"

he said, presently, as we turned out of the high road through a gate which the groom jumped down to open.

And, as we passed on, I had ocular demonstration that there was game to be shot, if I could only manage to hit it.

In due time we arrived at a lodge, the gate of which was being held back by five children—the eldest of whom, a girl of about seven, carried a baby in her arms. All, except the baby, either bobbed or pulled forelocks, according to sex, as we passed, grinning the while in a fashion which made me set my host down as good-natured.

The house was a cheerful-looking, two-storied, creeper-covered, verandahed, conservatoried building, without anything remarkable about it. The arrangements appeared to be comfortable. Servants took my luggage, and McCausland led me to the gun-room, which was his own particular apartment; and I rather admired him for not calling it his study, as many men, who never open a book, style the places where they smoke and doze; or his sanctum, a term used by people fifty times more squeamish than I am, which yet always jars on my ears as disgracefully profane. On a table were biscuits, wine glasses, and various bottles and decanters.

"It is an hour and a half to dinner," said he; "will you have a biscuit and a glass of sherry? No? Then a sherry and bitters, or champagne and bitters? I am going to open this pint of champagne, anyhow."

He showed himself knowing in whets; pouring a drop of Angostura bitters into tumbler number one, draining it into tumbler number two, and then pouring it back into the bottle. After which the pint of champagne was divided equally between the glasses. Treated in any other fashion, Angostura bitters is too obtrusive, at least to my palate.

Then we looked at his guns, and took mine out of its case, and he approved of it; and then he showed me my bed-room, and I got ready for dinner.

When I went down into the drawing-room, I found a lady there, which took me somewhat aback; for, thinking I was in a bachelor establishment, I had not made a very elaborate toilet.

"Hope you find yourself comfortable, sir," she said. "If you want any thing, ask, please. I've had the mattress put atop, but if you prefer feathers, it can be altered at once."

The dress of the speaker was somewhat too bright in colour for my taste, so was her complexion. Her hands were very large, and almost bursting out of the tight kid gloves she wore. While she was speaking, and I was calculating whether she was a relative, or only a housekeeper, McCausland entered, and asked me if I would take his wife in to dinner; and as this was my first intimation that he was a married man, I think it was creditable of me not to show surprise.

Certainly, I at once understood that his selection of a spouse had not tended in any way to remove the barriers which separated him from the county families; he had married below himself in position and above himself in age. But what are such trifles as grammar, deportment, beauty, youth, when weighed against the domestic virtues of Mrs. McCausland? Speaking not in haste, but after serious reflection, I can say that I never sat down to a better dinner, more nicely served, in my life. It was not elaborate, so far as the number of dishes

was concerned, but the cookery of each was simply perfect.

I was so charmed, that I exerted myself to please my hostess during the meal, and succeeded in inspiring her with confidence, at all events; for when McCausland, who was his own butler, went out to get a bottle of port up after dinner, she told me that her husband had a weakness, and asked me not to encourage him in it.

"You don't look to me like one as liquors more than he should; and I'm sure you are kind-'arted, and would not push a man on to what was killing him by inches for fun, as many gentlemen would do, quite thoughtless."

"I cannot promise to check him," said I; "for that would do no good, and only be offensive. But I certainly will not egg him on."

"Thank you, sir; I understand. And don't you go stinting yourself neither, or I should be vexed I spoke. He is a good husband to me, is McCausland; he has only got that one fault."

I think perhaps I did act as a check upon McCausland that evening; for when he urged me to have another glass more than I wanted, I pleaded the necessity of keeping my hand steady and my eye clear for the morrow, which seemed to strike him as a good and sufficient reason for sobriety, and he proposed a game at cribbage, at which we played for sixpences till bedtime.

We did not start next morning at that early hour which some eager sportsmen affect on the first, but made a comfortable, dilatory breakfast, and smoked a philosophical pipe after it, before lacing on boots and buttoning gaiters—operations, by the bye, which were performed, as they always should be, on a low chair, with a hassock to put the foot on. Why have a rush of blood to the head, if you can avoid it?

Then we shouldered our guns, and went out on to the lawn, where I made the acquaintance of Davis, the keeper, and the dogs—two pointers and a retriever; for, to my delight, we were to shoot over dogs, to watch their working being, to my fancy, quite half the pleasure. I took a liking to Davis at once—a tall, wiry man, with clear grey eyes, and a frank smile, whose grizzled hair and whiskers told of a good many years' experience in preserving and breaking; and whose manners, respectful and self-respecting, were such as at one time commonly distinguished huntsmen, keepers, and guides, but which, I fear, are now somewhat more rare.

"What do you propose, Davis?"

"Well, sir, we will take Winthrop's Farm this morning, I think. I have ordered luncheon at Seven-tree-well."

"All right. Is the dogcart out?"

"All ready, sir."

So we mounted, and drove to a distant corner of the estate, and there commenced operations.

"We will walk the stubbles first, gentlemen, if you do not mind, so as to drive the birds into the turnips."

So Davis took the dogs up, and we entered a large field, from which a crop of oats had lately been carried; but as there was little cover we took it wide, not expecting to get a shot.

Whirr! away they go—mark! twelve of them down

in the mangold. Another covey of fifteen gone to the same field.

Presently I heard Davis's voice—

"Look out, sir, you are coming right on a hare!"

Up got a brown thing, with ears, ten yards in front of me, and up went my gun to my shoulder. But I was so excited that a blurr came before my eyes, and I fired wildly and widely. Pulling myself together, however, I was steady with the second barrel, and poor puss suddenly subsided. Next we went into a wheat stubble, part of which, owing to the formation of the ground, had been reaped with the sickle, leaving cover so good that the pointers were let loose, and presently both came to a stand.

We advanced cautiously, guns gripped; but "'Ware pheasants!" cried Davis, as one old and three half-fledged cocks, with a couple of hens, went sailing off unmolested into a neighbouring copse; and I began to think that it would be stupid not to stop till October.

In the next stubble a covey rose within forty yards, and we dropped a bird a-piece, the remainder being marked down in the next field, which was clover. Here the dogs soon found them, and we got a fair go in with all four barrels, thinning the covey by another leash, which ought to have been two brace, only I was late with my second barrel. McCausland got a hare and I a rabbit in the same patch; and then we went to the turnips, and the real sport began. McCausland could not be called a first-class shot, and I was inferior to him; but we made a bag of ten brace by luncheon time.

I know I wanted an excuse for a rest, and was highly pleased to see the boy with the basket, by the side of a picturesque spring under the trees.

To reach the spot, we passed a waste piece, where rank grass and brushwood formed thick cover.

"Look out, gentlemen!" said Davis—"the largest covey we have should be about here."

Rattle! A wood pigeon flitted out of a tree, received a volley of four barrels, and died—by whose hand I know not; though I tried to establish a reputation for magnanimity by swearing it was McCausland's.

Startled by the fusillade, the covey spoken of by Davis sprang up, and whirled off to a less noisy spot. Mark!

"How many did you count?"

"Twenty."

"I made it twenty-one."

"Did you notice anything particular about that last covey, sir?" asked Davis, when luncheon was over and we were reposing.

"I only noticed one old bird," replied McCausland.

"That is it," said Davis. "I have got the cock bird stuffed, in my lodge."

"Eh? Tell us all about it, Davis."

"Well, you see, sir, this was a strong lot, and I watched them carefully from the day they were hatched almost; for this is a terrible corner for vermin, and I was anxious they should be reared. By creeping carefully through the long grass and stuff, I could see them without disturbing them. About the third time I did this, I got a good view of the whole brood in an open place, the little ones running out from the hen's wing, pecking about, and running back again; the cock stalking around, looking proud, I thought, of his family. Just, however, as he came under a bit of a rail there is

there—which I will show you presently—a fount sprang down upon him, quick as a cat, and had him pinned by the throat in a moment; while the hen and her chicks ran and fluttered under the bushes. I had my gun, but would not shoot, hoping to save the partridge; so I ran up, and jobbed the varmint with the butt till I killed it. But the bird's crop was well-nigh torn out; so I put it out of pain, and took them both home, and I have had them stuffed, just as I saw them, and put them in a glass case. An old friend did it for me cheap, but kept it to show for some time; and I only got it yesterday. And I thought I would not tell you about it, sir, till I saw if he made a good job of it, and I think he has."

We paid a visit to the scene of this tragedy, and then continued our day's sport, which was quite as good as I could desire, and proved, moreover, a fair sample of what followed. Indeed, I enjoyed it more when the birds got somewhat wilder. The *cuisine* also continued as good as it had been the first day; and I found I had hit upon such a good thing, that, with a few absences to London on business, I remained at McCausland's nearly up to Christmas. There was certainly a lack of society, and my host did get intoxicated occasionally; but he was never quarrelsome in his cups, and one cannot have everything.

One evening, when I expressed some surprise at his having secured such a wonderful cook, living so far in the country, and so much alone as he did, he said—

"Ah, seven years ago I feared that I should lose her. I coaxed her all I could; that was no good. I offered her any wages she liked to name, and even that was no good."

"And how, then, did you manage to retain her services?" I asked.

"I married her," replied McCausland, calmly.

"But," said I, when I had somewhat recovered from my surprise, "I wonder that Mrs. McCausland consented to—to employ herself in the kitchen after she—was Mrs. McCausland."

"Oh, that was part of the bargain," replied he.

Ah, well! it was an eccentric household, perhaps, but a very comfortable one; the shooting was excellent, and the price I paid for all, nominal.

In the dull and distant colony where I write this, I often think with regret of the weeks I spent at McCausland's shoot.

THE following, told of Thomas Campbell, is very neat, as illustrating the sentiment with which the authors of old days regarded their publishers. At a literary dinner, Campbell asked leave to propose a toast, and gave the health of Napoleon Bonaparte. The war was at its height, and the very mention of Napoleon's name, except in conjunction with some uncomplimentary epithet, was in most cases regarded as an outrage. A storm of groans burst out, and Campbell with difficulty could get a few sentences heard. "Gentlemen," he said, "you must not mistake me. I admit that the French Emperor is a tyrant. I admit that he is a monster. I admit that he is the sworn foe of our own nation—and, if you will, of the whole human race. But, gentlemen, we must be just to our great enemy. We must not forget that he once shot a bookseller." The guests, of whom two out of every three lived by their pens, burst into a roar of laughter, and Campbell sat down in triumph.

Roses on the Brink.

BY WILLIAM SAWYER.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—HIDDEN TREASURES.

RANDOLPH AGNEW'S impulse was to leap into the water, with some vague idea of pursuit.

The strong hand of Marco laid on his shoulder detained him. The mocking voice of Marco bade him act like a man—not like a boy.

The youth turned sharply upon him.

"Is your own conduct that of a man?" he demanded.

"In what respect?" said Marco.

"Do you forget, then, that you are Zerina's father?"

Marco shrugged his shoulders.

"And that it is your own miserable child who is in all probability being carried off before your eyes by that villain? For that Zerina is his prisoner on board that ship I have not the faintest doubt. And here, while I am all indignation, you stand there like a Stoic!"

"The Stoics were sensible people," retorted Marco. "They never wasted their energies at the expense of their feelings. Why, man, does it follow that I do not love Zerina, or lament what has happened to her, because I am not prepared to jump into the river, in a frantic attempt to catch a steamboat by its tail?"

"Nonsense!" cried the youth, impatiently. "Had you the feelings of a man, you would show them as other men show them. Do you think that if I saw my child fall into the water I should hesitate to reflect whether I could swim or what were my chances of safety for myself? No, I should make a frantic attempt to save its life—"

"And perhaps lose your own in the endeavour."

"Perhaps; but what of that? I should at least show that I was a human being, with a human heart beating within my breast."

"Good. And you regard me as a monster, with a brute's heart beating in my bosom?"

"No; the brute risks all for its offspring."

"Because it has not the sense to discriminate. But tell me, why is it that I find you taking this sudden interest in Zerina? She is not your daughter, and I am not aware that she has ever shown you any special favour."

"Perhaps not," said Agnew; "but if the truth must be told—and it must come out sooner or later—I have long been impressed by her beauty, her grace, and that fine, free spirit of hers. She has grown up before my eyes, developing like a flower; and I have come to regard her with a stronger feeling than mere admiration—in a word, I have come to love her, and this is why the prospect of what has befallen her is intolerable to me."

"Yours is a selfish feeling, after all, then."

"If you will have it so—yes."

"And, pray, does Zerina return your affection?"

"I trust so."

"But you have no assurance of the kind from her own lips?"

"No."

"Good. And now let us see what is to be done in a practical way—not in the way of throwing ourselves into the river—to ascertain what has happened, and set about remedying such evil as there may be to de-

plote. I must see our good friends the Dormer-Pagets, and hear what account they have to give of their neglect of the charge they undertook. Will you accompany me, or are you anxious to be off to our dear Harcourt?"

Randolph Agnew was suddenly reminded of what had transpired a few evenings before.

"Since you speak of Harcourt," he said, "let me warn you that it may not be altogether safe for you to cross his path."

"Indeed! Why not?"

"He believes you guilty of treachery—that you have taken Knowles's sister into your confidence with regard to his past life, and so injured his prospects with the family."

"It is false," returned Marco, promptly—"unless, indeed—"

He stopped abruptly.

"Unless what?"

"Why, that Effra—that my wife—has allowed her curiosity to get the better of her, and has taken to prying into my papers."

"What! You entrust secrets like ours to writing?"

"Of course—why not?"

"Can you ask, with the proof of the danger of the practice thus staring us in the face? This revelation, whatever it is, may utterly ruin Harcourt's prospects."

Marco spread his hands, palms outwards, in a manner peculiar to himself.

"And you wish me to regard that as a calamity?" he said. "You want me to express my sorrow at his loss, when he does not hesitate to sacrifice my daughter to secure his own safety? Curse him!"

It was the first touch of feeling he had suffered himself to betray; and though at the expense of his friend, Randolph was glad to see it—the more so because Zerina was concerned. There had sprung up in his heart a genuine affection for that fair girl: it increased hour by hour, as the peril to which she was exposed threatened more and more to cut off all chances of his ever calling her his own, and it had the effect of estranging him more and more from Harcourt, who had had no hesitation in sacrificing her to his own chances of escape. He even forgave Marco, in a degree, the treachery of which he had in all probability been guilty, in respect of revelations made to Aunt Effra, in consideration of his relationship to Zerina; though he could not forgive him the indifference he had but recently assumed.

As the above conversation ended, the two men ascended the bridge spanning the river, and separated—Randolph in a fever of impatience, because nothing could be done to help Zerina, who had unquestionably disappeared on board the steamer; Marco more composed, and evidently prepared to take a course of his own.

In the carrying out of this course, he that evening betook himself to the old house by the riverside, which had been locked up since his departure from England. It was more desolate, more gloomy and begrimed than ever. The shadows of evening filled it like ghosts. The very door opened with a shriek and a creaking, as if unseen beings protested against being intruded on in their gloomy retreat. There came to meet the evening air a gust, cold and chilling, that went to the very marrow; and the air was full of indescribable

odours, made up of damp, rats, mildew, closeness, and fifty other ingredients.

Feeling his way in the gloom, Marco found himself in the Hall of the Magic Mirror.

It was faintly lit, with a greenish hue that was the mere phantom of light; the mirror itself was thick with dust, and would not have reflected him had he approached it at the proper angle, which it was necessary to do, for the whole secret and magic of the thing lay in its being so constructed that it showed not the figure standing before it, but one or more concealed in a room by the side. This was how it had reflected himself to the astounded eyes of Aunt Effra.

Thinking over the delusion practised on that lady, Marco could not repress a laugh; but immediately checked himself, startled by the echoes of that laugh in his ears.

"Poor soul," he muttered; "it is a little hard on her, perhaps, to have a husband and no husband; but her own obstinacy has brought it upon her, and she has nobody but herself to blame. Had she controlled her temper, I could have controlled mine. But she had been her own mistress too long to brook restraint. And then that capital idea of hers that the marriage must be a double one to make it sure, as if the law of this stupid country holds good everywhere! She may think herself free, but that freedom will cost her an annuity to her husband, on which he means to revel all the rest of his days!"

The prospect of this was so pleasant, that he chuckled and rubbed his hands, and so doing passed into the room in which he had spent so many hours with Zerina—he over his lace-work or at his easel, she with a book, or idling over an old harpsichord in the corner.

The room looked now as if it never could have been endurable. The ashes were still white in the grate, as the fire had burned low and expired when he was last there. A table cloth was spread over half the table, with a mug, a couple of glasses, and a plate and knife on it—all just as when he had risen from supper on the night preceding his departure from England. For the rest of the room, with the exception of dust, all was as it had been when Zerina quitted the house to pass her time with the Dormer-Pagets. Traces of her taste and care were still visible in a vase of dead flowers standing in the window, and a roll of knitting lying unfinished, stabbed through and through with the needles, just as it was thrown down.

Marco sat down in the great leathern chair in which he had passed so many hours of his life, and surveyed the room with a shudder.

"What a place!" he exclaimed aloud; "and for me to have buried my life in it! What a contrast to the bright South, with its sunshine, and all that makes life so joyous! And but for Harcourt and for her, I might never have known this misery."

There was a scowl upon his face, and he sat biting the finger nails of his left hand savagely.

"Ah, it's well that I should come here to be reminded of it all," he presently burst out. "The hour of revenge has come, and I might falter—I might forget or forgive, did I not surround myself with the evidences of all I have suffered. Thank Heaven, I have been firm so far. What is done is done. Now for the rest; and then to tear myself from this wretched country, live upon my savings and the annuity of that

hideous woman, my wife, and give myself up to enjoyment."

It was observable that, though he spoke of enjoyment, it was not in a tone that had anything hopeful or exhilarating in it. The delusion of men's lives is that they can shape them to certain ends, with a certainty of realization, and then shake off the habits they have acquired in their onward progress. They forget that habits, whatever they may be—habits of industry, of avarice, or what not—become tyrannical; they are a second nature, and cannot be shaken off with impunity, or give place to something utterly foreign to what the nature of the man has become.

Yet Marco was not the only individual who nourished a delusion. He had sown the seeds of cunning, treachery, and revenge, and he hoped to realize the fruits of happiness.

Misguided wretch!

The dream of the future in which he indulged was so gratifying that he sat musing over it, until all the faint light of evening had gone, and he was in utter darkness. Starting up to a consciousness of this, he hastily kindled the red clay lamp suspended by the chain from the roof. The faint rays brought out the quaint shadows of the room as of old, but scarcely added to its cheerfulness.

This, however, mattered little to Marco. He had come there for a purpose, and he at once set to work to carry it into effect.

"The time is come," he muttered, "for disclosures and reprisals. How little Harcourt suspects what he has done, or how completely I have him in my power! How little the gorgeous Margaret, the superb Madame Dormer-Paget, thinks of the way in which she is revenging upon herself the wrong she did me in the old time! Are people mad, that they think they can play with others with impunity? Do they think me a fool, an idiot, a—" he paused for some term reproachful enough, then added—"an Englishman, that I should suffer everything, and avenge myself on none of them? Ha! ha! It is well: good Marco, kind Marco, obsequious, patient, long-suffering Marco, thy day is come, and thou hast thy revenge in full—heaped measure, running over."

He rubbed his hands together, hard, and chuckled as he spoke.

Then, reaching up to the swing lamp, and unhooking it from the chain, he stood it on the floor near the fireplace. His next proceeding was to raise the heavy rug, and roll it into a corner. In so doing he laid bare the dark, worm-eaten boards of the room. These were all apparently firm and solidly set, but in one of them was discernible a small circular hole, as if a knot in the wood had been removed. Taking a small key from his pocket, Marco knelt, and inserted it in this aperture—which was, in truth, a keyhole—and there was the sound of the key turning in a lock.

Then the board was easily lifted from its place.

The Italian's ingenuity had converted the space under the flooring into a box, and this particular board was only the lid, capable of being firmly locked to one of the rafters.

As a place of security, it was unexceptionable.

The opening of the box disclosed to view a quantity of treasures stowed away in it. There were bags of money. Leathern cases of jewellery were discernible.

Several cups, and a large salver in gold, glittered in the rays of the lamp. There were also many papers, carefully arranged and tied about with pieces of ribbon.

The eyes of the kneeling man gloated over these treasures.

His long, lithe fingers clutched first at one object, then at another. He took up the gold plate, and weighed it in his hands, as if to satisfy himself that it had lost none of its value. The leathern cases of the jewels were opened one after another, and bright, glittering stones were exposed to view; diamonds gleamed, and the blood-red rubies glowed with a heart of fire in them.

Like a child pleased with the glitter of the colour, Marco bent over these things. The money-bags he took up and chinked, listening to their auriferous music. Then, drawing from his breast pocket a leathern case, he spread out and smoothed between his palms a bundle of white, crisp bank notes, the silvery crackling of which made delicious music in his ears. Having smoothed them, he took up each one between his thumb and finger, examined it carefully, and placed it on the ground by his side, until there was a little heap there. This was added to until the last note crowned it; then he took the heap, and carefully folded it together, and placed it in a stout envelope, which he drew from his pocket for the purpose.

"Two hundred and fifty pounds of my darling Effra's money saved out of our wedding expenses," he muttered. "Capital! A fool would have squandered this and more; but it will form a capital nest-egg. I will keep it for luck, and add the annuity to it as it falls due. Now for the papers."

Out of the mass of papers he selected three bundles, and, kneeling still, carefully examined them.

As he knelt thus by the lamp on the floor, it threw his shadow in a gigantic and distorted shape on the wall. It was a monstrous shadow, with a vast head, elongated features, and hands with fingers a foot long, clutching at exaggerated images of the bundles of papers.

The first set of papers had reference to Harcourt, called in them Hilton Gathorne; they were of the date when he was consul in the East.

"The time is come to use these," he muttered. "He can be of no further service to me, and had best be removed out of my path."

The second roll bore the name of a woman; and the few extracts Marco ran over were sufficient to indicate that this woman was Faroe's sister, Harcourt's first wife, who perished in the flames in the East, with her child, in the burning house which Harcourt was suspected of igniting with his own hand.

"These also will be needed," the man said. "This woman trampled upon me, and laughed in my face. Have I taken my revenge? We shall see—we shall see."

There was yet a third roll, and it consisted of two letters only.

Marco smiled as he untied the string round these letters, and paused, as if enjoying the reflections they suggested.

As he did so the monstrous shadow on the wall, thrown by the lamp standing on the ground beside him, underwent a singular change. Marco had not stirred. The lamp had not been moved. Nevertheless the re-

flection was entirely altered. The gigantic head grew into two heads. The hands outstretched toward the opening in the floor multiplied into four hands. The shadow was fantastic as that of some hideous idol in a temple of the idolatrous islanders of the Pacific.

"Should all fail," said Marco to himself, "this will seal Harcourt's doom."

As the words were uttered, and he was in the act of opening the paper, it was abruptly snatched from his hand. At the same instant a foot kicked the lamp to the other side of the room, and smashed it, leaving all in absolute darkness.

"Who—who is it?" shrieked Marco, grappling with a man.

There was no answer.

Without a word, the intruder bore down upon the Italian, and with an adroit intertwinning of a leg—the feat of a practised wrestler—brought him with a crash to the ground.

Then, disentangling himself, the man noiselessly retreated.

The Man in the Open Air.

THE rains have gladdened the hearts of the Thames and Lea anglers in particular, in which welcome change, if not too long continued, all the rodsters who essay under-surface fishing (for the fly has nearly had its day) in other rivers must equally participate.

Gudgeons of respectable size have shown in the Thames in vast numbers, and from ten to twenty-five dozen a day have been brought ashore in the well of a single punt, the fish taken by two rods. The presence of this delicacy in our waters may be ascribed to the greater cleanliness of the bed of the river; not that there is a less absence of sewage entering the channel in the higher districts, but by reason of the continuous heavy floods, which were almost unprecedented in their number during the autumn of last year and beginning of this.

Gudgeons like a clean bed, and stones free from slime are absolutely necessary to their well-being; as, after the spawning process, it is incumbent upon them to rub and scour their scales upon substances which will remove an offensive coating infested with parasites, which, if not removed, would prove fatal to the fish.

Roach are likewise finer this year, which may be attributed to the same cause; the roach, after its family duties, being covered with a peculiar pimple on each individual scale. Amongst anglers the saying is, "the roach are getting rough," that is, preparing to spawn; and no true fisher will take them, or encourage others to do so, when the fish are in this condition, as the flesh is soft, and altogether unwholesome.

The perch is the only freshwater fish that is said to be "in season" when full of spawn; but as the perch is an erratic creature in this respect, and is generally found with a little or more roe, it would amount to a prohibition from our breakfast tables if this exception did not obtain, although it is more than probable it could not be maintained.

The chub, of which the poet speaks—

"I never saw a fool lean; the chub-faced chop
Shines sleek with full-cramm'd fat of happiness—"

is now getting into its prime, which he never is until we have a decided touch of frost; and he is ever in better fettle and firmer in flesh when the rivers are locked up with ice. Then the chub deserves the title of the white trout of winter. The dace are likewise in heavy shoals, more particularly in the tidal water about Teddington, Twickenham, and Richmond; and, indeed, in the net-fishermen's district, till we get downwards to Fulham, they may be seen quitting the water while dangling by a hook wielded by tyros on the bank, or wading the stream at the ebb, knee or waist deep.

To see anglers so low down as this is a sight which has not greeted Londoners for upwards of a quarter of a century. How well the Rev. C. D. Badham expresses our antecedents respecting these white *Leucisci*:—"All those favourites of our young boyhood, which somehow never escaped our rod; for when the midsummer day-dream was passed, and our light fish basket had nothing to show but gentles, pastes, and tangled tackle, we were sure at night, albeit with closed eyes, to see the bobbing float disappear under water, presently to bring out the slippery, knotting eel, twisting our line, and soon to cover our eager hands with the mica of microscopic scales."

Why, then, not a word upon the bleak or freshwater sprat? Of these there are plenty for youthful sport in the Thames, and far too many for the more matured angler. They are termed by some the river swallow, as they are perpetually in motion; but call the bleak by any name you please, when sufficient of them "they make excellent meat," as Walton avers; and, be it known, they are now best in season.

For those perch fishers who may be troubled by bleak taking the hook, particularly if the bait be gentles, before it has scarcely sunk beneath the surface, it should be known that their unwelcome presence may be dispensed with by throwing in a handful of dry bran, which, floating down the stream, will induce the whole of them to follow it until every morsel has been eaten.

The rapacious pike does not appear to be so numerous this year as in former seasons; but it may be that the great numbers that were killed at the opening of the fishing has greatly tended to their decimation. Doubtless, the other fish do not regret the absence of this fell tyrant of the pool; but with the pike fisher it is a matter for lament, when October arrives, to find his prey so few and far between.

The aristocratic trout is being introduced into the Maidenhead waters by the local association in most liberal numbers; thirty brace of handsome fish, the other day, were the third instalment this season. The determination to stock the lower waters with carp and tench has met with decided encouragement, and will doubtless be attended with the utmost success, as both of these fish thrive amazingly in the Thames.

THE new boy in buttons one evening went up to the drawing-room on the bell being rung. When he returned to the kitchen, he laughed immoderately. Some of the servants asking the cause of his mirth, he cried, "What do you think? There were sixteen of them who could not snuff the candles, and were obliged to send for me to do it."

The Ruins of the Acropolis at Athens.

GREECE has always been the favourite land of all to whom classic training has made familiar the mountains, streams, and the general landscape of that land which gave to Europe the highest lessons of philosophy, science, art, poetry, and eloquence.

Athens especially excites enthusiasm; and, though time and foreign invaders have left in desolate ruins the buildings that once crowned its Acropolis, and were regarded as the masterpieces of architecture, even in its ruins Athens is still wonderful. To the Christian, who is less imbued in classic lore, there rises amid the ruins the shadowy form of Paul, the conquering Hebrew, whose eloquence rang forth on this very hill, proclaiming the new ideas that were to change the very structure of European society and thought.

Our view shows the recent excavations—it shows the genius of the past, with more recent barbarism. How out of place seems the square, massive tower on the left! Elsewhere it might command some respect, for it is a venerable pile, reared by the French dukes of Athens in the thirteenth century; but here it is a sacrilege. The little edifice that almost touches its base is the Temple of Victory, with its Ionic colonnades in front and behind, and its dead-wall overlooking the precipice. The friezes are sculptured with the scenes of the Grecian victory over the Persians at Marathon.

We come thus to the Acropolis, which was at once the sanctuary, the fortress, and the museum of Athens. The statues and paintings are gone, but on the most elevated ground stand the ruins of the Parthenon.

A little to the left, farther back, was the Erechtheum, a double temple—the eastern division dedicated to Minerva Polias, the western to Pandrosus. In front can be seen the splendid portico upheld by Caryatides, or female figures. The wall upheld by abutments is a Turkish work.

The ruined amphitheatre, to the left, below the Acropolis, is the theatre of Herod Atticus, which led, by the covered portico of King Eumenes of Pergamus, to the theatre of Bacchus. The theatre of Atticus, erected about 150 A.C., became a fortress, then a tower. It was cleared and made visible in 1857.

Wanderings in Half-a-Guinea.

BY MAJOR MONK-LAUSEN.

CHAPTER XII.—A MONKEY PARLIAMENT.

OTHER game having been scarce during several days that we halted in this neighbourhood, we had lived a good deal upon monkey meat, which was plentiful enough. Indeed, in no part had I seen so many of the ape species as in this forest, a fact which the Alfoers accounted for by the prevalence of a peculiar species of cocoa-nut, rather small, but of delicious flavour, which only ripens at certain seasons, when monkeys flock in tribes to the part where it is found, and feast upon it till the crop is exhausted.

One morning, however, when I went out with my single-barrelled small-bore, with which I mostly hunted these animals, the trees being very lofty, and a long shot necessary, while a small bullet sufficed to kill the game, I found the wood silent and deserted: the whole

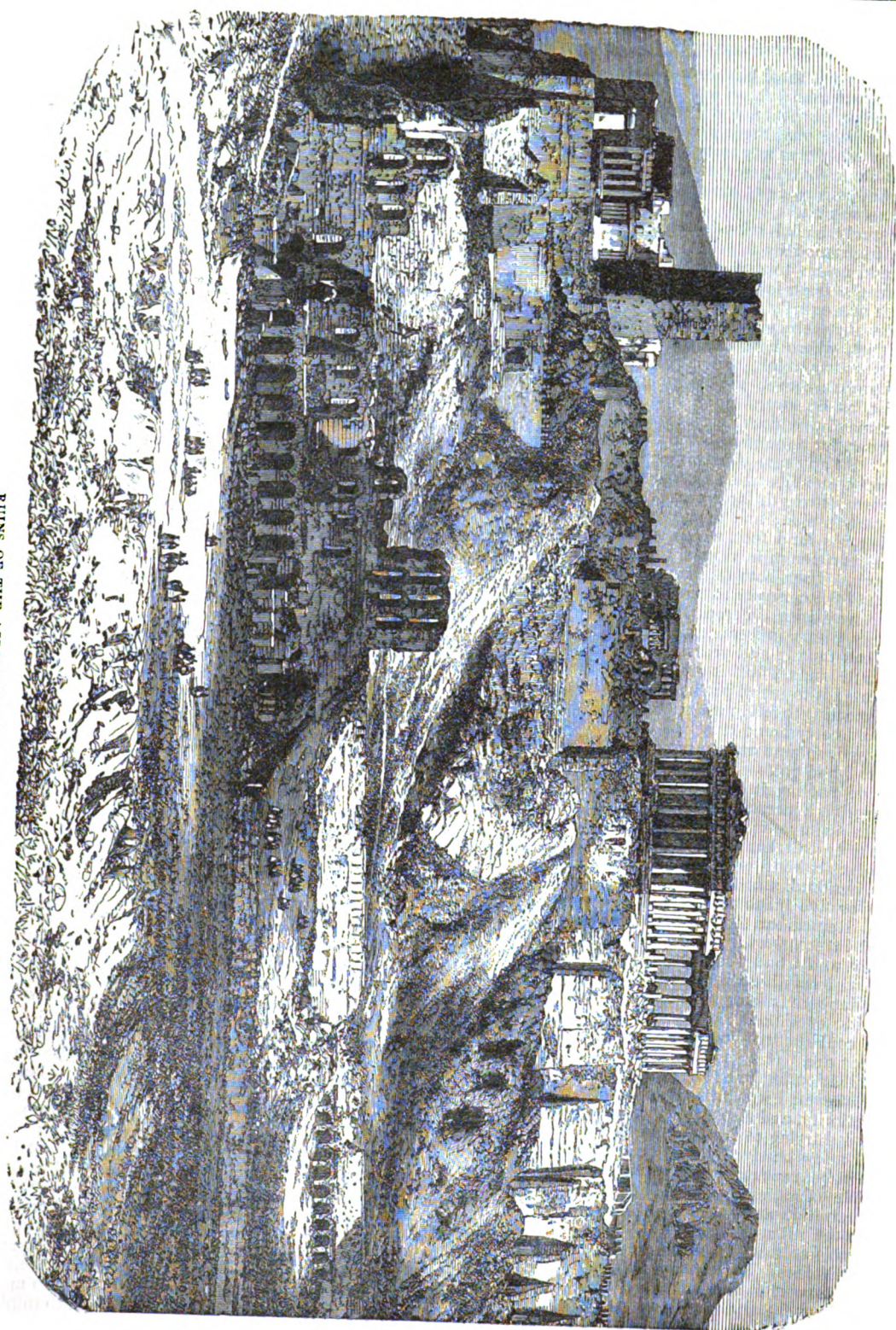
tribe had taken its departure. As the nuts were still plentiful, it was evident that my persecution had driven them away, and I felt a touch of remorse. Since, however, dinner must be provided for, I penetrated farther and farther into the forest, hoping at least to pick up a straggler or two. But there was not a sound beyond the droning of insects and the chatter of the paroquets; not a head of game visible beyond hares and quails, a species of food which I personally preferred to monkey; but to feed my party on such small deer would have been no slight task, either for the sportsman or the cook.

I continued my search for upwards of an hour, when I came to an open rocky space, from which there arose a loud murmur which excited my curiosity; and creeping up to the edge, keeping myself well concealed amongst the bushes, I saw the whole monkey tribe of which I was in search solemnly in Parliament assembled. For how else to interpret their actions? They were separated into two parties, one on each side, with a small open space between them, into which individuals would advance and chatter, and gesticulate at one another in an excited manner, which led at times to personal conflict. And, yes, there was a Speaker or President, a powerful grey ape, whose office it appeared to be to dart upon such turbulent orators, and bite them promiscuously—but selecting tender portions of the body for choice—until order was restored. The sight amused and interested me to such an extent, that, since fortunately no one observed a stranger in the gallery, I watched them for hours, until at last the House divided.

To have taken the individual votes of the members would have been impossible, for there were thousands upon thousands of them; and they jumped about in a way which would have made telling impossible. But they settled the question before them in a rough manner, thus: Taking a long, tough strip of vine which would have borne any strain, the parties attached themselves to the two ends, and a game of the tug of war—as we call it—ensued, those individuals who were not able to get at the vine holding on to the tails or the limbs of the place-holders of their party, and tugging for dear life. If my fancy that they were thus taking a vote is really correct, there was a good deal of sense in it; for the chances were strongly in favour of the numerical majority winning the day.

At last, after an infinite amount of chattering and screaming, gibbering, struggling, and swaying backwards and forwards, one party fairly overpowered the other, and dragged it away. The vine was immediately dropped, calm succeeded to the hubbub, and, anticipating the immediate dispersion of the assembly, I noiselessly withdrew. Even if it had been safe to do so, I could not have fired upon them: the conduct I had witnessed was so very human, so very European—nay, so very English—that to shoot an honourable member in cold blood from behind would have been too much like assassination. Besides, if monkey assemblies are as jealous of their privileges as human Parliaments are, I should have been torn to pieces by the infuriated thousands.

I was rewarded for my forbearance, or my prudence, whichever you choose to consider it, by shortly afterwards sighting a wild boar, who was whetting his tusks against a particularly hard tree. Stealing from trunk



RUINS OF THE ACROPOLIS, AT ATHENS.

to trunk, I got to within three hundred and fifty yards of him, when he left off his occupation, and listened. Pork being very rare, and consequently a great treat, and the pigs, what there were of them, being very shy, I durst not delay any longer; but though the brushwood somewhat intercepted my aim, I had a slap at him, and, as he did not run away afterwards, I concluded that he was hit.

Scarcely had I reloaded, when I saw a kangaroo, who, frightened by the shot, was bounding away from me, and as he topped the bushes somewhere about where the boar lay, I took a snap shot at him too, which was equally effective, for he did not jump again. When my piece was again charged, I proceeded to the spot, where I witnessed a curious spectacle. The kangaroo, when hit, had fallen almost upon the boar, who probably took the hopping animal for his antagonist, as he turned upon him. The kangaroo, likewise, may have considered that he owed his wound to the boar, for he seemed by no means unwilling to show fight. At any rate, the two crippled creatures were in the act of conflict when I came upon them. The boar, gathering strength for a charge, buried his tusk in the kangaroo's side; and at the same time the kangaroo, raising his hind foot, which was armed with a toe as sharp as a penknife, ripped the pig from shoulder to haunch. Then both fell back dead.

I had the curiosity to cut off the kangaroo's toe-nail, for it was quite different from that of the Australian species, which is formidable enough, as many a good dog has found; and years afterwards, on returning to civilized lands, I had it set in a mother o'pearl handle, and used it to mend pens. It mended this one.

Expecting to fall in with nothing but a monkey, which I could carry home myself, I had brought no man with me, and so was rather puzzled what to do with the game I had got.

I do not say it out of bravado—for really physical strength is a mere accident, and nothing to be proud of—but as a simple matter of fact, that I can draw or carry a heavier load than most men. But still, the pig weighed at least six hundred pounds, and the kangaroo a good two hundred, and to drag that lot to the camp, some four or five miles distant, was more than I bargained for. Remember, that the thermometer was over a hundred in the shade. However, the meat was wanted badly, and I had a reputation to keep up.

And I may here remark to young sportsmen that it is a dangerous thing to establish a reputation. Better to ride or shoot a little within yourself, and let those you could beat if you chose think themselves as good as you are. It saves much trouble, and a great deal of humiliation in the end.

However, I was anxious to maintain the idea of my superiority, and also to feed my people; and so I commenced trying to draw my game home. I dragged the boar a few hundred yards, and then went back for the kangaroo, repeating this exhausting operation for a couple of miles or so. Then I felt that I had had enough of it, and sat down to think. My trouble arose from the vultures—who had come down from the empyrean five minutes after the death of the animals—and the ants. If I left the meat, and went to the camp for assistance to fetch it in, it would take a good part of an hour from where I now was to get there, and the same for the men to return—say an hour and three-

quarters both ways. What chance would there be of any flesh being left on the skeletons in that time?

While I was meditating, the obscene birds grew bolder and bolder, until, at last, they endeavoured to tear the meat under my very nose; and, as a stick was not sufficient to keep them off, I was at last obliged to draw my revolver, and waste lead on the filthy, evil-smelling creatures. The report of firearms did not scare them, and the dead bodies of their companions seemed hardly to attract their attention. With six discharges I shot six vultures, and then reloaded, and shot six more.

Fortunately, the supply of the nasty birds appeared to be limited, or a certain number took the prey over a specified area, for when I had pistoled fifty of them, no more appeared. My only fear, then, was about the ants; however, it was necessary to risk something, so I laid my fifty vultures in a circle round the bodies of the boar and the kangaroo, and started off at my best pace for the camp. It was rather nearer than I had anticipated; so that I got back, with four men, to the spot where I had left the game within the ninety minutes. We were just in time: the ants had picked the vultures' bones quite clean, and were just advancing upon the meat within the circle. Indeed, we were considerably annoyed and bitten by the warlike little insects during the operation of removing the carcasses, which, however, was at last satisfactorily accomplished; and the expedition, instead of the ants or the vultures, had the advantage of the pork and venison. As game was so scarce, however, and even the monkeys now seemed to fail us, I determined to leave the spot, and make a good long march next day, for we had had a sufficient rest; and those of the late excursion who had suffered most were now recovered from the effects of over-fatigue and hardship.

We started—as was my custom—a little before day-break, and when the light began to glimmer through the trees a curious phenomenon became apparent: the monkeys had returned. I thought at first that their scouts had noted and signified our departure, and that they were returning to their old feeding-grounds simply because the coast was clear. But it soon became evident that they were following us; nor could we long doubt about the hostility of their intentions, for Booboo, Ponda, and Work were simultaneously flogged by a discharge of cocoa-nuts from the trees overhead, and the shower fell very thickly about the ears of the rest of us.

The skulls of natives are expressly adapted by nature for these attacks, but to Peter Tromp and myself the risk of concussion on the brain was serious.

I passed the word to extend; and in that order, and every man firing independently, as he saw a chance, we confused the aim of the monkeys, and held them in check. But the trees were so lofty, and the topmost branches so thick, that but little execution was done; and our advance was slow and tedious to a degree. So I blew three shrill whistles, which, as I before explained, was the signal for "climb trees," and my eight Poopooans were up in no time. Here they had all the advantage, as the missiles of the apes were only dangerous when thrown downwards—the creatures could not hurl them laterally with any effect. The men, too, lodged amongst the branches, could use their muskets with such effect that the monkeys had too much to do to keep their own bodies out of danger to think of pel-

ing Peter Tromp, Piti, and myself, who remained below. Then, as the creatures fled from the horizontal fire, they exposed themselves to my rifle, and Peter, who was smarting from several cocoa-nut contusions on his back and shoulders, likewise plied the shot-gun he carried with some energy; so that, altogether, the monkeys began to fall in all directions, and presently there was a general rout.

When the coast was clear, I recalled my men from the trees, and we pursued our journey without further molestation.

Now, I have little doubt but what the assembly I had witnessed the day before was a council of war, at which it was finally decided to attack us, and that this concerted attack was the result of the hostile vote; but this of course is mere conjecture, and those who are of opinion that I am crediting the brutes with too much sagacity and power of combination may be right. Every one can judge for himself. I merely record the event. I only know that to see the bodies of the enemies who had engaged us in regular battle roasting for supper made me feel very nearly allied to a cannibal.

A New Irish Novelist.

FOR many years past there has been a want unsupplied, and that is of a novelist ready to step into the gap, and take up the place of Charles Lever or Samuel Lover. The writings of these two popular novelists are world-wide in their reputation, and many a smile has been evoked at the adventures of their heroes; but till now no one has afforded even a glimpse of the rich humour that pervaded their works, and Ireland seemed to be unrepresented at a time when novels teem from the press, and the peculiarities of other parts of the kingdom are largely represented.

At last, full of promise, a new writer has sprung up, in the person of Owens Blackburne, whose new story, "A Woman Scorned,"* is one of the brightest that has been for some time issued from the press. At the outset, after reading, one has to grant that it is improbable; but then so are some of the best stories that have ever been written; and if a tale thoroughly interests the reader from beginning to end, if the fortunes of hero and heroine are followed with eagerness, and the work is at length laid down with a sigh because it is at an end, what more can be desired from a walk in the regions of romance?

Owens Blackburne possesses that genuine descriptive power which at once enlists the sympathies of the reader in favour of the creations placed upon the page. These seem to be real creatures; they talk and think humanly; every act in the drama has its *raison d'être*; and the whole plot is made to work smoothly, and to the purpose of making a clear, complete novel.

"A Woman Scorned" is the story of a little, neglected Irish girl, who lives with her beautiful step-sister, and rough, drunken, fox-hunting step-brother, at one of the decayed Irish habitations, grandiloquently termed by the people castles. The castle of the O'Driscolls is on its last legs; there is a haystack on the lawn; and inside, its inhabitants are put to many pinches to keep up their gentility—for the O'Driscolls

are gentry, and scorn work in every form and shape. It would be unfair to the reader to give here a *résumé* of the plot. Suffice it to say that every character stands boldly out of the canvas, in the most vivid manner, and you realize them all; from the brother and sister, down to the shock-headed scoundrel—the odd man—and back through the Irish servants, and the pleasant old lady friend, and the dashing young dragoon officer, to the pretty, piquant little heroine herself, who proves to be a perfect little violet, hiding away in her own modest corner. A rose would be a better simile for the little flower, inasmuch as she displays at last a fair amount of thorns.

The great point in "A Woman Scorned" is that the author shows real power in delineating Irish character. Evidently from the sister isle, the writer paints real Irish men and women of the Lever and Lover type; and if this course is followed up with care, and the next novel devoted more exclusively to the humorous and pathetic side of the Irish character, a brilliant career seems ready to open out to one who possesses powers that have not of late been displayed by the various writers of the Irish school who have been before the public.

If we may advise this author, we should say, choose in your next story a plot savouring more of everyday-life humanity, and less of romance. This may be hypercritical, but it is good advice; though we have read the story from the beginning to the end with the deepest interest, and should advise every subscriber to ONCE A WEEK to do the same.

A Matter of Policy.

A BEAUTIFUL and bashful young woman of about nineteen summers called recently at the office of a life assurance agent, and asked him timidly if he could tell her how long people of a certain age would live.

"Madam," replied the agent, coughing respectfully behind a prospectus, and drawing his chair nearer to her, "here are our tables of expectation and average mortality, which contain all the information upon the subject that you can desire."

"Well," said she, "how long will a man of sixty-seven, and who eats peas with his knife, live?"

"According to our table, madam," replied the agent, "he should, on the average, survive eleven years, three months, and sixteen days."

"That," said his visitor, "would be till the 1st of August, 1887?"

"Precisely, madam, on the average expectation of mortality; for we must all die, and it is therefore well to insure against loss of the loved ones in a company whose character—"

"And how much could I insure his life for?"

"Oh, for any amount—say for fifty thousand dollars," he answered, taking up a blank form of application. "Let me recommend the unexpected advantages offered by our non-forfeitable endowment policy."

"Well," said the young woman, "I think, then, that I'll marry him."

"Insure him, you mean?" corrected the agent.

"No, marry him—you insure him. You see," she added, with a burst of confidence, "I love Herbert,

* London: Tinsley Brothers.

and Mr. Dawkins is old enough to be my grandfather. But Herbert is poor, and I just worship the corner lots that Mr. Dawkins builds on. And Herbert is very patient, and says that if I will only fix a day, no matter how long he may have to wait, he will be happy. Now you say Mr. Dawkins will die by the 1st of August, 1887; and, as it wouldn't be decent to marry again till I've been a year in mourning, I'll arrange to marry Herbert on the 2nd of August, 1888; and if Mr. Dawkins doesn't die by then, you'll give me fifty thousand dollars. Oh! thank you."

And with a deep bow she swept out of the office.

Half-and-Half at the Admiral.

THREE thirsty souls in Hertfordshire went tramping through the dust.

Says Dick to Sam, and then to Ned, "Drink something, lads, I must!"

"My throat is dry," says Ned; says Sam, "I'm parched as any stick."

"Good luck, then!" chorused all the three. "A public in the nick."

A country inn, beneath a tree where swung a cheery sign—

A rubicund old Admiral, whose looks said "Drink and dine;"

A parlour cool, with flowers sweet, and chairs inviting rest;

A comely dame for Hebe bright, with face in welcome dress'd.

"A pot of coolest beady beer—prime old and bitter ale!"

Cried Dick; and soon before them stood the old and pearly pale.

Three glasses clear the dame too brought, beside the pewter full;

But these the travellers scouted as they each took one grand pull.

A few foam flakes fell softly out, as number three just sighed.

"Go, fill again," cried Sam; and then, "I will," the dame replied.

No pumping engine decked the bar, no wondrous-coloured flask,

But from the cellar, cool and dim, she drew it from the cask.

Up came the foaming, glistening beer—the Briton's purest draught—

"I lead this time," said Sam, all smiles; and wondrously he quaffed.

Then Ned and Dick each took his pull, a thorough honest third—

"Now, just one more," cried Ned; "and then, boys, onward like a bird."

Down went the dame, up came the beer, and Ned led off this time,

He took his third, the others drank, and vowed the liquor prime;

The score they paid, and took the road, with vigour now renewed,

And vowed that beer to be the best that ever brewer brewed.

Next time the friends strolled out that way, cried Dick, "Boys, foaming draught!"

And as they passed beneath the sign, they rubbed their hands and laughed.

"Here, hostess, fill that tankard up; our throats with drought are parched!"

The landlady her apron smoothed, and lips and eyebrows arched.

"Ah, gentlemen!"—she shook her head—"a sad mistake I made;

Such goings-on as that, I fear, would ruin soon our trade.

My master ever since that day's done nought but peak and pine,

For what I drew was half pale ale, and half was sherry wine!"

GEO. MANVILLE FENN.

A Sudden Shower.

AMONGST the many mysteries of London, there is none more difficult to solve than that of the sudden gathering of a crowd; and there is no crowd which presents more strange, various, and characteristic features than that composed of the people who "stand up" out of the rain. "Where the mud comes from" has long been a matter for wondering inquiry; but by what strange convulsion of social life the people in this sudden and incongruous assembly are thrown towards one particular spot is a still more amazing consideration.

There are certain gateways and narrow covered passages in this great city which seem contrived as refuges for wayfarers during a shower. Seldom at any other time is a soul seen beneath their shelter; and few of the ordinary passengers through the main streets have ever penetrated their remoter depths. Once let a brisk shower set in, however, and they are filled like the pit entrance to a theatre, but with a crowd at once less noisy and more diverse. The "laundress," who, perhaps, has the care of chambers within some of the houses to which the gateway is the entrance, smiles with grim derision as she comes out on an errand, and discovers how full of company her precinct has become. She even stands there herself for a moment, looking out upon the wet pavement, and eyeing the assembly with that peculiar glance which is identified with "taking stock."

It would be difficult to "take stock" of some of the lingerers, however, for they are to be seen at no other time, and in no other place. We say it boldly, and after long observation.

Who is that strange, faded old woman, dressed in black silk, all creased, and shrunk, and spotted in great patches of the colour of a stale tea-leaf? Why does she wear a bonnet which seems to have been made of a spare breadth of that already too-spare dress? for what hands were those loose-fingered gloves originally intended? and why does she carry an impracticable umbrella, which is tied with a rusty string twisted round a horn button, and evidently has not been opened for years? Is she the last claimant to some great estate in Chancery, and are the papers concealed in that umbrella? With what a strange expression of interest she regards the fashionable attire, and especially the dainty feet and ankles, of the young creature who has flitted under the grim old gateway for a moment's refuge, lest

her already slightly ruffled plumage should be made a "sight," and that snowy skirt be maculate with street mud! With a gaze of serious wonder does the mysterious old lady note every point of the gay attire, as if with the object of carrying away the pattern in her mind's eye, and having it made up for herself in some distinct and distant period of existence. Why do people buy oranges when they are standing out of the rain? or rather, why do people then buy oranges who taste them at no other time? Has the plashing shower a tendency to suggest a parched or arid condition of the body, or is it for the amusement of peeling the fruit that some man, whose appearance betokens beer, should invest the price of his usual refreshment in a way so unexpected? That shadow with the red face and hollow eyes, which seems to crouch behind the other loiterers nearest the wall, should never spend his money so. He always appears on the occasion of a shower, but never takes shelter until his greasy clothes shine with superficial wet; then, should his miserable appearance evoke to the extent of twopence the pity of some mistaken philanthropist, he looks wistfully out at the weather, endeavours to assume an air of anxious responsibility, and shambles off to the nearest street, where a public-house lies just round the corner.

The man who is sitting on the basket knows him; indeed, the man on the basket knows more of that select crowd than would be obvious at first sight. He is the general medium of such communications as pass amongst them, for he takes possession of the gateway in a manner which bespeaks thorough acquaintance with its resources. He seems to regard the rain as a fortuitous accident which gives him the opportunity of smoking a quiet pipe, and, perhaps reflecting that "one touch of nature makes the whole world kin," takes advantage of his immovable position to address a remark or two to the other temporary tenants of the locality. The boys are a sad drawback to the quiet enjoyment of such a retreat; perhaps a stray cheese-monger's lad, or even a printer's boy, may seek a minute's shelter, and be tolerably quiet; but the newspaper boys are utterly objectionable. They will dash in suddenly, the wet running from every seam, and spatter the mud from their thick highlows; then, after giving everybody the trouble to make way for them, will dash out again, hurling themselves into the rain with an exultant and defiant yell which wakes all the strange, unearthly echoes in the neighbourhood. They will stay longer if there is the chance of witnessing anything from so secure a retreat, especially anything involving the grief of such passengers as cannot stay for shelter; and their remarks upon the personal appearance of such unfortunate pedestrians serve to amuse the company, until they become more particular in their application, and are summarily checked by the man on the basket by a method known casually as "clouting the head" of the author.

It is a wonderful standpoint for some strange observations of humanity, this same sheltering gateway; and when, after the last cab has rattled from the stand, the rain abates, and that queer crowd melts away, never perhaps to meet again, the philosopher who has leisure to ponder on the mysteries of London streets will find his reflections partaking of a grave and sorrowful character, for which he will not be able immediately to account.

The Egotist's Note-book.

AS a matter of course, a surgeon at the seat of war has to run the gauntlet of many dangers. Dealing with such barbarians as the Turks, he risks being shot at; for the Moslem holds the Red Cross in about as much respect as he does the Cross of Christ. Then the army dealer has to contend with fatigue, bad living, want of sleep, and the terrible diseases that accompany an army in a wasted land. On the whole, then, in spite of his knowledge how to ward off attacks of disease, and the protection of the Geneva Convention, the surgeon leads no enviable life, especially when, out in Servia, he has a new peril to deal with; inasmuch as one gentleman writes home to say that a report has been spread, probably from jealousy, that the volunteer surgeons are sent there in the service of the Turk instead of the Servian—that is to say, they are enemies and spies, whose mission is to kill and not to cure. Rather hard, this, upon our English friends.

That was an amusing story told by Sir Wilfrid Lawson, the other day, at a luncheon in Cumberland. It was as follows:—"There was once a mayor of an ancient borough who was a staunch teetotaler, and well known to be so. He attended the festivities promoted by a neighbouring borough, and somebody who knew the mayor well put a glass of milk punch close to his plate. The mayor saw the glass; he could not resist it; he took it up, and quaffed it off, and sat it down, saying—'Lord, what a cow!'"

I wonder what Mr. Biggar thinks of Irish wit and humour! He went to take the chair at a lecture at Manchester, with the result that there was a scrimmage, and he received a scalp wound, from which he bled profusely. Very playful are these meetings where Home Rulers are concerned. Irish wit and humour are all very well; but when they take the form of feeling round the tent for heads, and then hitting them, the satire becomes too keen, and the striker runs the risk of getting into trouble, like the man who was deceived: he thought he was hitting a Tipperary boy, whose skulls are proverbially hard, but the one hit was from another part, and went in like an eggshell. The consequence was, the striker got into trouble, for his victim died.

I should like, in charity, to be present, with a good supply of life-buoys, when Mr. Stott starts, on October 9th, to fly with his new aerial machine from Dover to Calais and back. He chooses a soft place to fall in—namely, the sea; but then the sea may let him sink. The machine is described as being 3,000 lbs. in weight, and yet only some five feet long by four feet high. There are no wings, tails, or rudders; and yet it is expected that the machine will perform its task—there and back in sixty minutes. Of course, the construction is a secret. Well, I hope Mr. Stott will succeed. Do I believe he will? No, I do not. There always were sceptics in the land.

"Blackbird-catching," as it is called, seems to be a very ingenious, as well as a very profitable, pursuit. The *modus operandi* is as follows:—You engage in the

traffic with a small, easily-handled vessel—a schooner or brigantine—and after finding out where you can to advantage dispose of human flesh animated by a soul—in other words, of slaves—you go and cruise amongst the South Sea Islands, till the confiding natives put off in their canoes, and offer their fruits and produce for barter. You then have some large stones ready, which you drop over the side into the frail canoes, which immediately sink, leaving their late occupants struggling for life in the sea. Now, as the poor fellows would in all probability be eaten by the sharks, you next benevolently drag them on board, stuff them down into the hold, and then—sail away, and sell them. This is “blackbird-catching,” as practised to-day by British scoundrels in the South Seas. It has its disadvantages, the principal being that the natives have become annoyed at the extent to which the sport is carried on upon their shores, and, by way of reprisal, they have taken to seizing ships, and massacring all on board. So long as they do not confound the innocent with the guilty, this is a very sensible way of playing tit-for-tat; and I wish the South Sea Islanders success in their efforts to play fair.

How history repeats itself! Once upon a time there was a proverbial bull who ran into a metaphorical china shop. Here is the real thing, as related in a late case which occurred at Southwark police-court, where, in a drover's case, it came out that the hot weather made the cattle he drove unruly. “Some of them bolted into a boot shop, while one actually ran into a china shop.” The reporter should have said was *chevied* into a china shop—it would have been more in accordance with the alliterative “bolted into a boot shop.” By the way, if that bull had been our way, he would never have entered the shop where dwells our china-man and glassist, for over the door, in big letters, stands the name “Butcher.”

The *Lancet* gives a pathetic little history in a late number. Maximilian, Emperor of Mexico, closed his brief reign in the courtyard of Queretaro, where he was shot by command of the late President Juarez, and ever since his widow, the ex-Empress Charlotte, has been a prey to acute melancholia—the paroxysms of which, however, were at first followed by intervals of partial return to reason. In these she was allowed to amuse herself—if amusement be the word for an occupation which turned upon the deepest tragedy—in writing the experiences of her husband and herself in their few months' sojourn in Mexico. This she has long abandoned, and in the château of Laeken, where she is under strict medical surveillance, she has relapsed into confirmed dementia, which her physicians have given up all hope of curing. As in similar cases, she recurs to the predilections of childhood, one of which was a passion for flowers; and, Ophelia-like, she spends most of her time over them, feeding as they do her once lively but now diseased imagination. Their attraction for her was touchingly manifested the other day. Eluding the watch of her attendants, she had fled from the castle, but when overtaken it was found impossible to induce her to return, except by the use of means which would certainly have proved hurtful. One of her physicians bethought himself of her morbid affection for flowers, and by strewing them from time to time before her she

was gradually lured on her way back to the château, where a closer surveillance has since been placed over her.

That was a curious question that came up at the Guildhall police-court the other day, when a City police-constable, in dealing with a case of cruelty to animals, said that it was a custom when a horse fell and grazed the skin, inasmuch as the hair would not grow again on the place, to take a piece of skin from another horse and put it on the wounded place, where it would grow. Sir Andrew Lusk said this would be vivisection; but the officer contended that the skin from a dead horse would do, as that, if planted, would grow on the living tissue. Sir Andrew said it was a question for the British Association. It is more than this—it is one for the Yankees out West. For if these things are true of the horse, why should not the man whose hair has been “riz” by the Indians replace his scalp, either with his own stolen goods or those taken from some other head—say, Indian head?

Behold an anecdote that should find favour with fair readers:—

At a fair given for the benefit of the poor at one of the Paris theatres, a pretty actress presided over one of the stands, when a Russian nobleman, who chanced to be present, banteringly asked her how much she would take for a kiss. She glanced at him rather sternly, and replied that she would not kiss any man but her betrothed. The prince passed on; but returned to the stand a quarter of an hour afterwards, and said, rather thoughtfully, to the young actress—

“Will you permit me to ask you another question, mademoiselle?”

“With pleasure, sir.”

“Have you a betrothed?”

She eyed him a moment in surprise, and then said, with a blush and a smile—

“No, sir.”

“Would you like to have one?”

“That depends on circumstances,” she said, laughing.

“Well, then, would you take me?”

So saying, he handed her his card. She was greatly surprised, and finally stammered that she would give him an answer next day. On the following morning he called at her house, the reply was in the affirmative, and to-day mademoiselle is a princess and a happy wife.

THE season has arrived when every one is thinking of turning from the sultriness of town life to the pleasures of a country tour. Ladies who take very little exercise when at home, with true British courage often undertake long and tedious journeys. It is of the highest importance, under such circumstances, that the clothing should in no way impede the proper circulation of the blood, but especially should the old but bad practice of gartering the leg be avoided. Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London, has provided the only means of remedying this in his New Patent Stocking Suspender, which he will send by post for 2d. extra. The prices are—Children's, 1s. 6d.; maids', 2s.; ladies', 3s. Our advice is to write at once for a pair.

Those Hyænas.

SOME men are born sportsmen, some achieve sportsmanship, and some have sport thrust upon them. But, considering that in these days the number of aspiring hunters is absurdly out of proportion to the amount of game to be hunted, the last category is a small one. I come into it, though, for circumstances led me, some years ago, into a close neighbourhood with wild animals, which, though it was not without a certain charm, I should never have sought for myself. I certainly, when a boy, thought it great fun to prowl about the hedges with an old horse pistol, endeavouring to murder small birds; and I remember investing sixpence in a shot at a hawk, with the gun of a man who was bird-minding. I hit the hawk, too, and saw him fall with a joy which even the shop of the pastrycook failed to afford. I had that bird stuffed, and paid for the vanity with money which would otherwise have served to stuff myself. If any reader happens to be one of the initiated, and remembers what strawberry messes were like at Barnes's, he will appreciate the sacrifice. I also liked to see a terrier destroy rats. But then the use of firearms was strictly forbidden; and the rattle took place in the yard of a disreputable pothouse, to have been seen in which would have brought down fearful vengeance on our—I had nearly written *heads*; and from Adam and Eve downwards, the human race has always had a keen relish for whatever is forbidden. Why, there was once a boy, Pascal, who took a desperate liking to mathematics even, because his father forbade him that particular study, and for genuine perversity. I think that beats our first parents hollow.

In the true British love of sport, however, I fear that I must confess myself terribly deficient. I would not risk my precious neck over a rotten bank I thought my horse would fall at, for all the foxes in Leicester-shire.

When birds are wild, or fish will not rise, I want to go home, and do something else than try to catch them; and as for wilfully incurring certain fever and ague, fatigue and mosquitoes, with the chance of being scratched to death by panthers, eaten by lions or tigers, hugged by bears or boas, ingeniously tortured by savages, for the sake of mere amusement, spending money the while instead of earning it, I cannot even imagine the fun of such a proceeding; and so the chances I have had, and which have made many of my friends' mouths to water, were comparatively thrown away upon me.

It is a good many years now since I received my first invitation to one of those city banquets which appeal so forcibly to the imagination of foreigners, and of such natives as still take an interest in the story of "Whittington and his Cat;" and I suppose that most men will smile at my greenness, and most ladies feel disgust for my greediness, when I confess that the event afforded me extraordinary gratification. But, madam, you are unjust; greediness had nothing to do with my satisfaction, or if gastronomical instincts heightened it in any way, it was to an inappreciable extent. For that dinner marked an epoch in my life: it was an acknowledgment of professional success.

A certain guild had employed me on a work of considerable importance, and this invitation was a mark of

its having been fairly done; or, at least, such an interpretation was not so very far-fetched. This was my first appearance in public as a public man, and there was a probability of my health being drunk. Ah, well, we may smile in after-life at the importance we once attached to such matters, but they are serious enough at the time; and though men who work for fixed salaries, and the luckier mortals who need not work at all, may deride my weakness, those who have painfully fought their way up in the world will understand the feeling which has made me preserve the *menu* of that dinner, and the programme of the concert which succeeded it, with the care which is generally reserved for scraps of ribbon, locks of hair, and epistles more affectionate than coherent.

I sat at that dinner next to a man who eyed me at intervals all the time I supped my soup, and then said, abruptly—

"Surely you are Stumpy Mason?"

"Yes," I replied; "but—upon my word—I—"

"Don't you remember Peters?"

"What, Duck's-egg Peters?"

"Well, I believe that I did not shine in scoring at cricket, and there was some such nickname."

"My dear Dux, how glad I am to meet you again; but though I remember you now, I should never have known you."

"Twelve years is a trying time for some memories; but I never forget a face; and you have altered less than most of our contemporaries, I think, Stumpy. Shave off your whiskers, and I could imagine you my fag again. By Jove, how I did bully you sometimes; and what a good fellow you are not to pay me out on the spot. You could, easy. I should 'take a licking' from you now. Don't pass that *sole à la Normandie*, whatever you do!"

"Delicious, indeed!" said I, after tasting it. "I condone all the pain I have endured from the back of your clothes brush for directing my attention to the fish. But what are you doing here? I thought that you were going into the army."

"I did try it for a short, a very short time, but I could not make it pay. My tastes required a liberal income, and I soon found that I was entrenching on my capital. So, as I felt confident that I had a genius for finance, I sold out, and took chambers in the City."

This was a vague account of a profession, but, of course, I did not ask particulars during the *entrées*. I felt sure that he would tell me plenty in the course of the evening, and this proved to be the case.

He was considerably astonished when my health was drunk, and put in his "Hear, hears," and raps on the table, with judgment and energy, when I made my speech in reply. The task, which you may believe had been carefully prepared, was not a hard one, as I had a technical theme to dilate on, and the great difficulty of speaking in public is the having nothing to say.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Peters, when I sat down, "so you are a civil engineer!"

"Yes."

"And a rising one, too."

"I hope so."

"I suppose you would undertake to cut a tunnel, make a railway, drain a swamp, at a moment's notice."

"Oh, yes, I would have a try," I replied, laughing.

"Perhaps I may throw a job in your way."

"Good man!"

"Yes, I am a promoter."

"Ah, I have heard of that profession, but I am not quite clear as to what it is."

"Well," said Peters, "you see there is a lot of capital in the country, the owners of which do not exactly know how to employ it, so they get up companies. Now, there are many men who have wonderful heads for devising useful and profitable projects, but who have neither time nor the peculiar physical requisites for working out the necessary details. That is my department."

"Give me an instance," I asked, becoming interested.

"Well," said he, "there was the Porpoise-skin Company, which some clever men started for the supply of a useful waterproof durable leather, which is in increasing request. They issued the shares, got the capital, &c., and employed me to find out where porpoises were most plentiful, and organize the supply. I did all that; I travelled about, went out porpoise fishing myself; hired the men who caught the beasts; chartered vessels to convey the produce; established sheds on the coast where the blubber was boiled down, and the skins cured. In short, I did all the practical work, and set the thing going."

"And did it pay?" I asked.

"It paid *me*," replied Peters, "for I received cash beforehand. Cash, that is, and shares, which I got rid of at once. I believe that dividends are not declared very regularly at present; but that has nothing to do with me. Of course all my expenses were paid, and I netted a couple of thousand. But I earned it, mind, for it was rare work. However, I am as hard as nails, and do not care for that. No more do you, I expect?"

"Hard work?" I replied—"why, it is all I ask for."

"Well, then, I think I may be able to accommodate you shortly. What is your address?"

A week afterwards he called at my office.

"Have you any work in hand, or in immediate expectation, Stumpy?"

"Nothing that is of very great importance," replied I.

"Well, then, are you willing to take a few levels, and draw up a report on the feasibility of a new railway, and are you competent to estimate the probable cost of it, within half a million or so?"

"To be sure, if I am paid for it."

"Oh, you will be paid, and handsomely too, whether the railway is constructed or not. And if you report favourably, and the affair is gone on with, your fortune is made; and as for fame, you will 'strike the stars with your proud head,' as Horace used to say."

"All right."

"We will go together, and I will pay all expenses. I have received a cheque on account for that. When will you be ready to start?"

"Any time. This evening, if you like," I replied.

"No. There is no need to go to Southampton till the day after to-morrow. The steamer does not start till Saturday," said he.

"Steamer? Ah, by the by, where is the proposed railway to be?"

"In the Himalayas—a grand country for the display of engineering talents. The Tyrol on a larger scale, you know. We may have time for a little sport, and game is plentiful, from tigers to pheasants."

Pheasants I could get at home, and tigers did not

tempt me; indeed, I could very well have done without them. But the prospect of being employed on such a gigantic work as a railway in the Himalayas was extremely seductive; and after a few inquiries, which convinced me that the project was *bona fide*, I agreed to accompany Peters on certain specified terms. Had it not been for his guidance, I should have been in considerable difficulties about getting ready for so early a start; but Peters seemed to know exactly what outfit was wanted for the tropics or the poles, and the right shops at which to get everything. Difficulties vanished at his touch, and before we sat down to dinner on the day he proposed to me to go, our berths were taken for Bombay, and I was the possessor of a gun, a rifle, a six-shooter, a hunting-knife, a cartridge pouch, a hammock, a roll of Cording's waterproof sheets, and a sufficient supply of flannel clothing. Those garments which had to be made for me were promised on the morrow; they came too, and they fitted me; and on Saturday morning we found ourselves in the Solent, without any particular fuss or bustle.

The overland route has, I think, been described by some one; and as for my first impressions of India, I had none, being too much occupied with the work in hand, and in too great a hurry to reach the district where that work lay, to take much note of surrounding objects, however novel and interesting, until I found myself in a country where progress was necessarily slow, and the life so strange and adventurous that the incidents of every day were forced upon my attention and memory.

The wonderful and magnificent range of mountains called the Himalayas lies to the north of Hindostan dividing the plains of India from the steppes of Tibet and Tartary. In length it is fourteen hundred miles, in breadth a hundred, speaking in round numbers. A dense belt of forest called the Terai skirts the base of the mountains. At four thousand feet the character of this forest changes: it is sparser, and different sorts of trees are found. At twelve thousand feet you come to grassy pastures, which extend to the snow line.

Peters was really wonderful. He knew exactly what preparations to make, where and how to apply for what he wanted, and how to circumvent difficulties; so that I had nothing to do but concentrate all my energies upon studying the charts of the country to be surveyed which he had provided, and this enabled me to determine our route with sufficient exactness. In a very short time, my companion had engaged twelve Puharree coolies, each of whom received a blanket and a month's pay in advance; had bought a couple of hill ponies and mules, and laid in a store of provisions; and we set out from the pleasant hill station where we had met with great hospitality, and plunged at once into the pathless forest.

Though I had to keep my eyes open to the rise and fall of the ground, the character of the soil, the description of timber, what was good for fuel and what for sleepers, and many other matters which would come into my report, I could not help feeling in a sort of enchantment; as if I had died, and found myself in another state of existence. The foliage, the trees, the flowers, birds, insects, the very atmosphere, were all so utterly different from anything I had ever imagined, that they hardly seemed real. And when we halted for the night, and our *routee* or tent was pitched, two bonfires lighted—one for the preparation of our dinner, the

other for that of the *chupatties* or girdle-cakes, which formed the principal diet of our coolies—and we sat and rested, with our pipes in our mouths, the romantic feeling culminated. I felt, and said, that civilization was a mistake—that roughing it was the only true enjoyment. I rejoiced that we were not travelling after the fashion of Anglo-Indians of the Civil Service, with large double tents, a host of retainers, and stores of all kinds in their train. We had no beer, no soda-water—only a few bottles of brandy, against sickness or extraordinary occasions. Our drink was coffee, and for meat we depended principally upon the products of the chase, illustrated that evening by a salmi of jungle fowl and some roast quail, which Peters had found an opportunity of shooting in course of the day. Soothed by a delightful feeling of freedom and content, and protected by a mosquito curtain from the attacks of insects, I lay down in our little tent, and sank almost immediately into a calm, refreshing sleep.

How long it lasted I know not, but I was roused in a manner which jarred upon my nerves to such an extent that the mere remembrance of that awakening gives me, at this distance of time, the shuddering feeling which one has on peering over a precipice. A dismal wailing at my very ear, as it seemed, was followed, or rather accompanied, by a forced, mocking, hysterical laughter, which I can only seek to give an idea of by these somewhat incongruous epithets; for a critic might well ask how a laugh could be mocking and hysterical at the same time. But that was the impression it made upon me. I imagined for the moment that I was in the abode of fiends, who were exulting with such joy as their own misery permitted over the accession to their ranks of a lost soul.

"Do you hear that?" I cried, springing up, and rousing Peters.

"Hear what?" he asked, yawning.

"Why, that horrible cry of distress, and the more horrible laughter. The coolies must be torturing some one of their number, and mocking his agonies. Come out and stop them. Oh, heavens! There it is again."

"Oh, bother!" said Peters; "it is only the hyænas, man. For goodness' sake go to sleep, and do not rouse a fellow up for every little forest noise. They are a nuisance, no doubt; and if there were any moonlight, one might get a shot at them. But it is as dark as a coal-cellar under these trees, except by the fire, and they won't come within the reflection of that. The coolies can be trusted to look after the ponies and mules for their own sakes; for if anything happened to them, they would have to carry all our goods themselves. Do leave me in peace."

In five minutes Peters' nose-breathings showed me that I had not inflicted serious or lasting damage on his night's rest. My own case was a less happy one. I could not sleep with those plaintive howlings and that demoniac laughter ringing in my ears; and when it ceased at length, and I dropped off, it was only to be roused again immediately in obedience to the requirements of Indian travel, and to start off unrefreshed, jaded and dispirited. I did not recover my energies till after the halt for the first meal, which I supplemented with a *siesta*, which set me straight again.

"Never mind, Stumpy, old man; you will soon get used to these little annoyances," said Peters.

But he was mistaken; the cry of the jackal, the snarl

of the leopard, the roar of the tiger, I learned to heed no more than the love ditties of nightingales or cats in my native land; but the hysterical laughter of the hyænas I never became inured to. There was something unearthly about it which jarred upon my nerves, and sleep remained impossible for me when they were near our encampment. Peters, on the other hand, was always restless when the more formidable carnivoræ were prowling close around us; going out every now and then with his rifle, making up the fire and assuring himself of the safety of the mules and ponies. So it happened that when tigers, who scared the hyænas away, were about, I got good nights; and when the inferior animals had the concert all to themselves, Peters got good nights. He had the best of it; for whether the shekarries had been very energetic lately in that part, or venison was more plentiful elsewhere, tigers were very scarce.

I feel that my words are weak; for, indeed, I am at a loss to convey any just idea of the nuisance the hyænas were to me. If, indeed, you have any occupation which requires concentrated thought, and live in a square haunted by organ grinders, you may realize what I suffered. The organ grinder is the hyæna of civilization. That I sought revenge upon my tormentors you may well believe; night after night I lay in wait for them; but though I could hear them close to me, they kept so cunningly in the shade that I could not get a fair shot; and though I several times fired at a flitting form amongst the trees, the daylight showed no marks of blood or other sign of the bullet having found its billet.

As I was making a rough survey of the ground we travelled over, our progress was naturally slow; and when I did not require Peters' assistance he went in pursuit of game, and sometimes had to wander some distance before he found any. One day he was away so long that I had done my work before he returned, so I thought the opportunity a good one for making some calculations for which I had collected materials, and writing up my journal. The lower fork of a large tree offered so comfortable-looking a resting-place that I clambered up into it with my rifle and note-book, and sat there scribbling for a long time. While thus quietly engaged I heard a rustling in the bushes below me, and looking in the direction saw a pair of antlers. I laid down the note-book, took up my rifle noiselessly, and cocked it. Presently a fine fat deer stepped out into the open, not more than forty yards off; I covered his shoulder carefully and pulled the trigger, when he leaped into the air and fell again, stone dead. It was the first head of large game that I had secured all by myself, and I was greatly elated, especially when shortly afterwards Peters arrived empty-handed, having had bad luck. We dined off venison steaks of my providing that evening, and I was baby enough to think them the most delicious that I had ever eaten. The remainder of the carcase was hung up, and we calculated on feasting on it again next day. But the laughter of the hyænas was more vehement than ever that night, and we found in the morning that they had managed to drag down and devour my deer, the well-picked bones of which strewed the ground in all directions. I hated the brutes worse than ever after that, and another trick they played us raised the indignation of Peters to a pitch equalling my own.

We were proceeding to inspect a rocky district where the vegetation was sparse, and our tent was pitched on the verge of the forest. My enemies here seemed to be bolder and noisier than ever, and alarmed the mules so much that they broke away and stampeded.

The bones of one we found clean picked in the immediate neighbourhood, the other had got clear of the wood, and we tracked him along the bank of a stream, a tributary of the Bhageruttee, if I mistake not, which ran through a wild, precipitous valley. A well-built bridge, which we could see in the distance, showed us that a village, to the *mookia* or head man of which I intended to apply for certain local information and assistance, was not far distant; and we hoped that the mule had taken refuge there. But we found him short of the bridge, close to the water, leaning against a slab of rock. He was in a pitiable condition, torn and bitten, with his near fore-leg broken, and a bullet put him out of his misery.

"What do you say, Stumpy," said Peters, as we turned away from the place; "shall we take vengeance on the destroyers of our mules and venison, and of your nights' rest?"

"If we only could!" I exclaimed.

"We can, we will," said he. "There is a moon to-night; the hyenas are sure to come and banquet on the body of the mule, and these rocks afford splendid cover."

I jumped eagerly at the idea, and that evening we returned to the spot and chose our positions; each, attended by a coolie, concealed himself behind a rock above, and within thirty yards of the body of the mule, and commanding a full view of it. Our shot guns, loaded with bullets, were carried by the attendants, while we held our rifles in our hands.

"I shall whistle, and then count three before I fire," said Peters, "so that we may shoot together."

"All right," I replied; and we went to our stations.

The waiting was a long and tedious business; but at last the moon rose above the beetling rocks—round, clear, twice as large seemingly as our English moons, and bright enough to read small print by. A dark form which I had just been able to distinguish before, stealing about, became revealed as one of the foul brutes I hated. While I was looking at him, another slunk up; then a third, a fourth, till presently there were no fewer than eight hyenas tearing, rending, devouring, and laughing hideously over their prey. One only seemed to be suspicious of the neighbourhood of an enemy; he dropped the shred of flesh he was feeding on, and stood apart, with his head turned in my direction. I brought the sights of my rifle to bear upon the centre of his forehead, ready to fire in case he gave an alarm, whether Peters signalled or no. But at that same moment I heard a low whistle. One—two—three. I pulled. Peters' rifle went off at the same moment; the second barrels were fired almost simultaneously, and four of the brutes were lying still or struggling on the ground. The remainder scuttled off; but, catching up our smooth-bores, we sent another volley after them, and two more bit the dust.

Six hyenas were not a bad bag.

I could not report favourably on the financial prospects of a railway on that particular route, and the project was abandoned. But I was paid for my time and labour, had no expenses, and the trip was one which I shall always look back upon with pleasure.

Roses on the Brink.

BY WILLIAM SAWYER.

CHAPTER XL.—A PLEASANT INTERVIEW.

TIME passes over nothing which it does not change.

Under its influence the flower blooms and the flower withers. By the operation of its silent forces, childhood passes into manhood: we attain to the fullness of our strength, we decay and drop into the grave. And Time, which is thus potent, affects even our passions and affections, its influence being alike potent over the palpable and the unseen.

Thus it was not amazing that the mere effluxion of time wrought a change—and that a speedy one—in Framlingham's petted daughter, Ruby.

The first shock of the disappointment she had experienced was, as we know, terrible in its effects on her frail, loving, gentle nature. The affection Edmund Harcourt had awakened in her had been deeply sincere, and the cruel tearing up of the first blossoms of love had been inexpressibly painful. The circumstances attending it rendered it doubly so. She had been insulted. She had been made to experience all the resentment of which she was capable. And there had, above all, been sown in her breast the seeds of that most fatal of all passions—that deadly nightshade of the human heart—revenge.

As we have said, it gave a false stimulus to existence: it destroyed while it seemed to nourish. Its victim drooped and faded, grew dim of eye and wasted of form, while the hectic flush burned in the pallid cheek.

But it was strange to observe how by degrees these symptoms changed. Arthur Pembrose paid no mere idle compliment when, on the day of their meeting in the Grove, he assured Ruby that she looked health personified. And, strangely enough, after that interview she grew yet stronger, healthier, and brighter.

The compact to which she had bound herself no longer weighed like a horror upon her heart.

She still hoped to see Edmund Harcourt exposed, and that she might be released from the charge of vindictiveness for the warning she had given Eva Knowles. She would have preferred that the exposure should have come through her hands, and that he should have known that it so came; but the feeling grew less and less strong every day.

It was absorbed into a growing sense of happiness.

Yes; imperceptibly to herself—but not to the anxious father to whom she was so precious—she was resuming the old delight in life, the old buoyancy of youth, the old sense of the abounding loveliness of the world in which she was called on to play her part.

And there was a reason for this.

At the bottom of it all, had she cared to fathom it, there lay a new feeling—a feeling of sympathy, of admiration and reliance—a consciousness of a want supplied and a gratification given, and that through the instrumentality of one individual.

It had all grown out of that hasty compact with Arthur Pembrose.

They had entered into a solemn league and covenant to crush Edmund Harcourt. Did it arise from the very unnaturalness of that compact, that it should come to embrace conditions that neither had ever contem-

plated? It was unnatural that a woman should seek aid in crushing the man she loved. It was unnatural that Pembrose should unite for such a purpose with a woman for whom he entertained a dangerous passion. And Nature, asserting herself, led to the most natural of all results.

The conspirators overleapt the bounds of their compact.

They loved.

Do not think lightly of Ruby in thus yielding to a second passion. She was very young, and in youth we know little of our hearts. We are apt to mistake sympathy for love. The first words of admiration are so precious, and awaken such pleasurable sensations in us, that we neither scrutinize the words nor the feelings. So Harcourt's cleverness and audacity made a deep impression on Ruby; his attentions were most agreeable to her; it seemed as if life had been intolerable in his absence, and she believed, at first, that even the heartlessness, and the discovery of all that there was against him, would make no difference to her. But it did. It is impossible for us to continue to prize that which is worthless. We do not cherish weeds as if they were flowers; we cannot do it, and so it came about that Ruby gradually awoke to the conviction that Harcourt had been supplanted by a truer and worthier man.

This discovery made, a difficulty sprang up.

The position which Arthur Pembrose held in relation to the Framlingham family was simply a business position. He was the manager of the establishment in Cornhill; but it had hitherto only been under favour that he had found himself in Arlington-square.

Though frequently invited of late, he had not the *entrée* to that "West-end or M.P. circle" on which the servants' hall so prided itself—which was, indeed, the one redeeming feature that rendered it possible for them to accept the wages of a City man, as Framlingham unquestionably was. Though Arthur's family was good, it was not rich, and he was thus compelled to seek his own living. In doing so he had received extraordinary favour on the part of his employer, and had been brought in contact with that employer's daughter; but it did not follow that the favour extended had no limits, or that advantage ought to have been taken of the confidences to which he had been admitted, in the way in which Arthur felt he had taken it.

This had to be explained to Ruby, and it was for a time difficult to make her see the full difficulties of the position.

"I feel like a man guilty of breach of trust," he would urge on her. "I might as well have taken your father's money."

"But you love me."

He would shrug his shoulders. That, he felt, would be but a poor argument to use with the house of Framlingham Brothers.

"And papa has no object in life but my happiness: he has told me so."

"He undoubtedly doats on you."

"And he has always spoken in the highest possible terms of you."

"That may be; I dare say Whittington's master thought highly of him, but don't you think he must

have been awfully surprised when the 'prentice asked his daughter's hand?"

"Yes; but you are not a 'prentice, dear. You hold a position of high trust."

"Which, I fear, I have terribly abused."

It was thus that all these little interviews terminated—unsatisfactorily as to the future; for confidently as she spoke of her father's love for her, she was not at all sure that it would extend to the sacrifice she might call on him to make.

The most hopeful sign was Hector Framlingham's growing interest in Arthur, and the increased frequency with which he was invited to Arlington-square. At length, on one memorable morning, he received an invitation of this kind, but couched in the coldest and least encouraging terms—it was short and curt, ordering him, rather than asking him, to come that evening.

Something in the tone of this command so chilled and froze the young man to the heart, that all day he experienced a sense of intense misery.

Going to the house in the evening, he found that there were no visitors, save himself, expected; and instead of being ushered into the drawing-rooms, he was left to cool his heels in the library—a dismal retreat, without a fire, and with only one light in the chandelier lit.

For half an hour he sat, hat in hand, cold, dismal, and thoroughly wretched.

At the expiration of that time, the door opened, and Hector Framlingham came in, a cloud on his face, and a chilliness in his manner, quite in accord with the scene.

"You got my note?" he asked, not coming up to shake hands as usual, but passing round on the farther side of the library table, and taking a seat by the empty grate. "I am sorry to trouble you to come here to-night, but there are matters best settled and put an end to out of hand."

Arthur Pembrose felt a cold dew breaking out on his brow, his teeth chattered, and, in place of replying, he dropped his hat, and almost fell from his chair in the attempt to recover it.

Instinctively he felt that some discovery had been made, and that a "scene" would follow.

"You will do me the justice, I am sure, Mr. Pembrose," Framlingham went on, "to acknowledge that I have always treated you as a gentleman. I have reposed the utmost confidence in you, and have to an extent included you in the circle of my private friends. You best know whether I have had sufficient warrant for treating you in this manner?"

"I—I hope so," Arthur blurted out, feeling that he was expected to give an opinion on his own conduct.

"Do you think so?" was the stern rejoinder. "Is that your honest opinion? Come, as an honourable man, do you think your conduct has been such as to justify the confidence I have placed in you—the friendship I have extended toward you?"

He was stern, severe, immovable, as he put the question.

"I will not pretend, sir," replied Arthur, "to misunderstand you. So far as your business is concerned, you know that I have discharged my duties conscientiously, and to the best of my ability. But you do not speak of business—"

"True, I do not speak of business."

"You allude to—to—"

"I allude, sir, to my daughter, Miss Framlingham."

Arthur Pembrose gasped. The thunderbolt had fallen.

"You anticipated this!" Framlingham went on. "I see by your manner that you did so. And now, narrowing my questions to the one point affecting Miss Framlingham, I repeat, has my confidence in you been justified? Have you requited my friendship as an honest and honourable man should do?"

"I—I am afraid," Arthur returned, "that it will be difficult for me to persuade you that I have done so."

"Persuade, sir? Persuade me! What need is there of persuasion in the case? Either you have acted as an honourable man or a scoundrel."

The young man sprang to his feet, stung at the implied aspersion on his character.

"Then, sir," he replied, hotly, "I claim to have played the part of an honourable man. My position has been a difficult one. From the first moment that I saw your daughter I loved her—"

"Presumption!"

"No doubt; but I could no more help loving her than I could help drawing breath. But one thing I could do, and did. I could keep the secret to myself, and suffer no word or act of mine to reveal it. For years I did so. What has happened since has convinced me that Miss Framlingham has regarded me with a degree of favour—"

"Which has justified you in making a declaration of your love for her?"

"No, sir; which has simply wrung from me an admission—made I know not how—that I did nurse this hopeless passion—hopeless, because I would never take one step towards its realization."

"You mean, that loving my daughter, and having taken means to inspire a similar feeling in her breast, you will leave her to the consequences of her indiscretion?"

"What else, sir, is possible to me? I dare not presume to hope—"

He hesitated.

"That I would consent to your making her your wife?"

Arthur inclined his head.

"Well, no," retorted Framlingham, with a sneer. "I suppose your presumption would hardly lead you so far. That delicate piece of diplomacy you must entrust to another: it is from my daughter's own lips that I am favoured with that modest proposal!"

"What! Has Miss Framlingham—" Arthur began. The other interrupted.

"I understand," he said; "but now let us come to an understanding, for things have gone far enough. You ask my daughter's hand. Now, listen to my answer. Do you think that I can suffer my child, reared in luxury, and moving in society, to cast in her lot with a man whose income is less than a thousand a year? Is it reasonable? Would it be just? Now, then, listen to what I propose: Your sagacity has saved our firm twenty thousand pounds, the sum for which the ship *Hannah* was fraudulently insured. That sum I have placed in the bank in your name—"

"In mine?"

"Don't interrupt. My daughter has her marriage

portion—not an inconsiderable sum—and when I die all that I possess is hers. She has been sorely tried, but she has convinced me that happiness is possible to her in the love of an honest, upright, manly fellow, as I believe you to be, Arthur Pembrose, in spite of your audacity in aspiring to Ruby's hand. Come, there's mine upon it—may you prove as good a husband to my child as you have a faithful servant to her father."

So amazed, so overwhelmed was Arthur Pembrose, that he could with difficulty stammer out a few words of thanks, of gratitude, of choking happiness.

There were tears on his cheeks as he accompanied Framlingham into the drawing-room, and clasped Ruby, who came forward to meet him, radiant with bliss, in his encircling arms.

Even before those tears had died away, all were recalled to the sterner duties of life by an occurrence of an unwonted nature.

A servant entering announced—"Mr. Faroe."

Before any refusal could be given, the rough, gloomy seaman came in, wrapped in his pilot coat, and wearing a rough fur cap, which he hastily doffed on finding himself in the presence of a lady.

"Beggin' pardon of all," he said, abruptly; "but there's this here as ought to be known, and knowed right out o' hand. What did I say to you, Master Pembrose, about this here Harcourt, as he calls himself? Didn't I say as I'd have his life? Did I, or did I not?"

"You did," Arthur replied.

"An' I'll have it, too," returned Faroe, at the same time producing from his pocket a handkerchief, in which certain papers were rolled up. "These letters—no matter where I got 'em"—(by the way, they were suspiciously like those snatched from Marco's hands in the old house by the river the night before)—"these letters are in his handwriting. They are addressed to a pal of his, who's kep 'em secret all this time for his own ends; but I've got 'em, and I'll use 'em."

"To what do they refer?" Hector Framlingham asked.

"Well, the fust is about the ooman—my sister, wus luck—as he married. Here's the letter in which he speaks of shipping her off to a lonely 'ouse, and it's ketching fire that wery night when he wasn't inside. It's just sayin' as he fired it himself: which he did, the beast! The other letters are neither more nor less than my death-warrant."

"In what way?"

"Why, it's just instructions to the skipper to make the ship I sailed in—the *Mercator*—all right, so that she might sink, and I—I that knew too much—might go to the bottom. Here's the proofs we wanted, then. Here's proof of his wife's murder, and here's his orders to send me to the bottom. Didn't I say as I'd have his life? And I'll have it too. If there's justice in the whole world, he shall swing for my sister's and her child's death."

The evidence thus brought to light was so important, that its discussion occupied several hours of the night which might otherwise have been devoted to the realization of such happiness as rarely falls to the lot of mortals. As the result, it was determined that Knowles, and Peckford, his solicitor, should be consulted in the morning—the main question being whether this matter ought not at once to be placed in the hands of the police.

Wanderings in Half-a-Guinea.

BY MAJOR MONK-LAUSEN.

CHAPTER XIII.—FORDING THE RIVER.

WE had hitherto been very fortunate in finding water; but one evening, when the usual hour for halting and camping for the night arrived, we could light on no stream or spring. I did not think much of this at first, as the sherbet-containing gourds were what we mostly had recourse to for quenching our thirst, but the trees which bore these failed us likewise. Our water bottles were empty, our mouths were parched, and the case looked serious.

We obtained temporary relief by milking the buffalo, and sharing the result—which was not a bounteous one, for she had yielded very little of late—and then pushed on, in hopes of better luck, till it was too dark to advance any farther, and we had to bear our thirst for that night as well as we could. I do not think that many slept; for my part, I lay awake, and sucked a pebble; or if I dropped off for a moment, tankards of foaming porter, or broad, thin, slender-stemmed glasses of sparkling, icy cold champagne were raised by imagination to my lips; and to awake with the effort to drink, and find that it was all a delusion, was trying to a short temper. At daybreak we renewed our unsuccessful researches, and matters began to look very serious, when a happy thought struck me, and I ordered our tame buffalo—who had been so rampagious with the thirst that it had seemed advisable to lead her with a rope—to be unloaded and let loose. She immediately started off at a hand gallop in a direction at right angles to the course we had been pursuing; and following her as fast as we could, we arrived, in about half an hour, on the banks of a wide and swiftly flowing river.

The cow made direct for the water, but started back on the verge of it, and came running back to us without drinking.

I had never heard of cattle being subject to hydrophobia, and wondered what was the cause of this sudden fright, which could even conquer the pangs of thirst. But on reaching the bank it was intelligible enough; for a row of crocodiles' noses stuck up just above the surface of the water, about a foot from the edge; and on advancing hand or head to the surface, a horrible mouth opened for a snap.

It was of no use going up or down stream in search of a safer place; far as the eye could reach to right and left, the dangerous brutes could be seen, thick as lawyers in the Temple.

Atah, however, was equal to the occasion. Seizing a light folding bucket which was part of our equipment, he swung himself out on the branch of a tree overhanging the river; and, lowering the vessel into it by a string, drew it up full, took a drink, and handed it behind him.

It is to the credit of the discipline of my fellows that, parched as they were, they handed it to me first. I gave Pitti a drink before I moistened my own throat, however, and then confess that I finished the bucket. Another was soon drawn, and all were satisfied, including the poor cow, who had probably saved some of our lives by her instinct.

This operation of watering the party in the teeth of the crocodiles took some time, and was not devoid of

either comical incidents or serious risks. It happened, for instance, that Cogger relieved Atah in filling the bucket, and, being either of greater weight or less fortunate in his selection of a perch, it so happened that the bough overhanging the river on which he lay out cracked, and subsided into the stream.

To see the crocodiles rushing to the spot from all directions, surging over one another's backs in their eagerness to get a bite, while poor Cogger, whitey-brown with terror, just managed to seize another and a firmer branch in time to save himself, was both terrible and grotesque.

One or two of these creatures had the hardihood to leave the river, and advance upon us who were on the bank; but for any man with a gun in his hand, a crocodile advancing thus openly is not particularly formidable. His skin, indeed, will turn the ordinary spherical leaden bullet, but internally he is vulnerable enough; and as he advances upon you, open-mouthed, it is the simplest thing in the world to fire down his throat.

But the brutes are not worth powder and lead. Some travellers, indeed, speak of eating them; and, befooled by their reports, I have tried a crocodile steak myself. Anything more intolerably nauseous and loathsome, however, cannot be imagined; and I recommend the Acclimatization Society to look elsewhere for a new *plat*. To destroy the monsters when they become aggressive was a necessity; but I forbade my men to use their ammunition in attacking them for mere sport, and strictly followed my own injunction.

But still the thinning out of the crocodiles was desirable, as they swarmed in this river beyond calculation, if it could be done at a cheaper rate. I tried several experiments with this object, which were more or less successful; and the most killing by far was this:—

On our way to the river, and at some four miles' distance from it, we had passed through a grove composed entirely of *nux vomica*, and Peter Tromp had warned us against inadvertently cracking and eating any of the nuts. I now sent two men to gather and bring as many as they could carry, and when I was provided with a good supply, I tantalized a crocodile till I got him to leave the river and waddle after me. Then, stopping at intervals and waiting for him, I pelted the nuts down his throat; dodged, ran, and repeated the manœuvre.

After a little while the monster stopped, reared up, rubbed its stomach with one of its fore-paws, curled up its head and tail, bounded into the air, and finally crawled back to the river, with its back like an arch, and, after convulsively splashing for a few minutes, sank dead to the bottom. Verdict, poisoned by strychnine.

Half an hour afterwards there was such a commotion in the water as you never saw; crocodiles of all ages and both sexes splashing, whirling round, leaping out of the water like salmon. They had devoured the body of their dead comrade, and the *nux vomica* was working its deadly will on them likewise.

When all was still, I repeated the experiment, with a similar result. Scores of crocodiles went floating down the stream, to be torn to pieces by other crocodiles, and so spread the destruction; and in two days the river was comparatively free from the pests, not more than a dozen of their ugly noses being ever visible above the surface at once.

My reason for halting so long in this one spot was that the direction I had planned to take necessitated our crossing the river, and I did not quite see how that was to be done until these wide-mouthed body-snatchers had been induced to move on; and this did not seem to be very feasible; for if we frightened away or destroyed those that we found there, others came down to the spot from the higher reaches of the river. So that at last I came to the conclusion that, for some cause or other, this was a special spot for crocodiles to congregate in, and that it would be necessary to seek for a passage farther up.

On doing this, my supposition proved correct, as before we had ascended five miles the reptiles were only visible here and there, so that a passage might be effected without any extraordinary risk from that source. But then, in revenge, the current was much more rapid—so much so, indeed, that swimming across would be quite out of the question for some of my people, though the river was not more than four hundred yards broad at the utmost. The trees in the country near the river were not suitable for raft building; and, altogether, I was more puzzled than I should have liked my followers to be aware of.

What rendered it desirable to effect the passage by some means was, that game was exceedingly scarce on our side, while my telescope showed me plenty of buffalo and deer on the other. So that early one morning, when I had been out on a fruitless hunt, I was tantalized by seeing a fine stag on the opposite bank come down to the riverside to drink, and without due reflection I took my small-bore rifle, waited till I could get a fair shoulder-shot, and fired, dropping him dead. For I forgot at the moment how doubtful it was whether we could ever retrieve the venison, though it showed at the time how free comparatively this part must be of the crocodiles, that, though the deer lay close to the water's edge, it was left undisturbed.

The desire to obtain my quarry, however, stimulated my imagination, and I hit upon a device for the transport of our goods and persons across the stream. A little inland, not far from our camping ground of the night before, there was a marsh, well supplied with frogs of the same large species as that which had attempted to swallow me, only not quite so overgrown. Their croaking had disturbed our slumbers over-night; the hind legs of a few of them had provided us with breakfast that morning.

Returning to my party, I directed the men to secure as many of these monster frogs of manageable size as they could; and while they were thus engaged, Peter Tromp and I repaired to a certain gum-tree which we had observed hard by, and collected a good quantity of the viscous substance which it yielded. A most excellent gum was this, being more like marine glue in its adhesive properties. It was subject to this peculiarity, that it would not dissolve in cold or even lukewarm water: heat alone could melt it. In the middle of the day, when the sun poured its full rays upon the tree, the gum dripped from every part of it, like water from a fountain. But at other times, as now, when we went to collect it, the substance had the consistency of gelatine, and it was necessary to expose it to the warmth of the camp fire before it became sufficiently liquescent for the object I had in my mind.

Piti, who was an ingenious girl, and to whose care

the fire was often entrusted, had made a rude but very efficient pair of bellows out of a skin, and these were now pressed into the service on hand.

Presently the frogs were dragged in, laid on their backs, and secured by tying poles to their hind legs in such a manner as to prevent their kicking or jumping. I took one of them, placed a stick in his mouth, and then smeared his lips with the gum in such a manner as to close them firmly, and held them together until the gum had become solid. Then I drew out the stick, inserted the nozzle of the bellows into the aperture, and blew away until the poor creature was puffed out to an enormous extent. Then, withdrawing the bellows, I gummed up the remaining space, so that the air was prevented from escaping, and the pontoon, as one might call it, was ready for use. Then, the poles having been taken off its hind legs, it was encouraged quietly down to the riverside and launched, and it floated like a bladder—though, indeed, it was little else, and my principal fear was lest it should roll over and let its cargo into the water; but, happily, its legs and arms prevented that.

It was then packed with a moderate amount of goods, and Pouda, who was the cleverest of the party in all matters connected with navigation, and believed himself to have a charm against crocodiles, got astride of the frog, with a flat board, which would serve as a rude paddle, in his hand, and shoved off into the current.

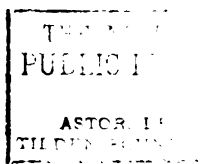
The experiment answered better than I had anticipated; for when the frog found itself fairly in the water, instinct led it to strike out, and it was only necessary to keep its head straight with the stick, to be paddled over, not rapidly indeed, but surely. Indeed, Pouda arrived at the opposite bank not more than a quarter of a mile lower down, and I had reckoned on, at least, double that distance.

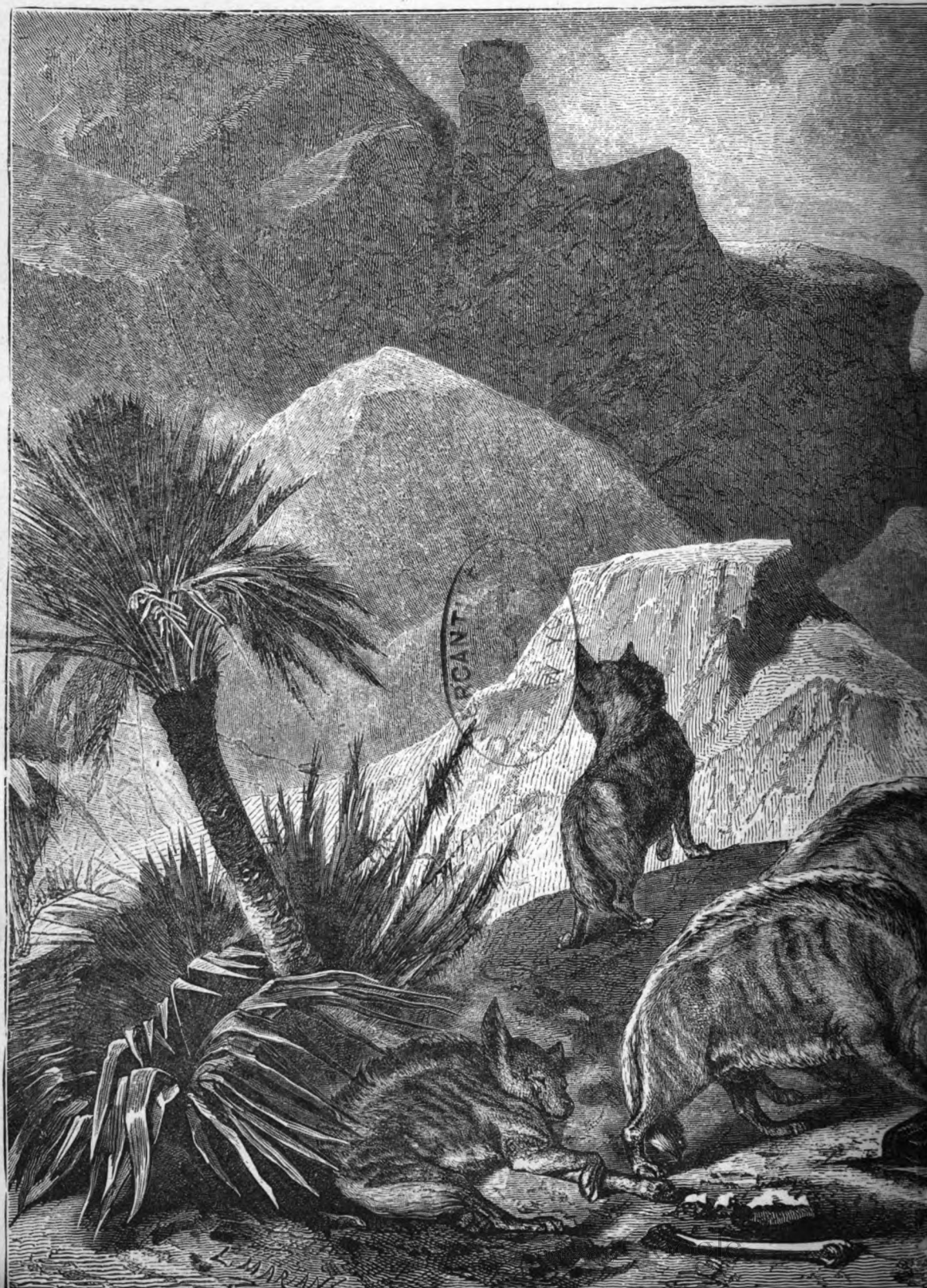
While the experiment was being tried, Peter Tromp, aided by two men and Piti, had been engaged in blowing out and gumming up other frogs; and now that success was assured, these preparations were carried on, amidst loud laughter from the natives, to whom the process of inflation appeared extremely humorous. I much fear, however, that the frogs did not equally enjoy the fun of it.

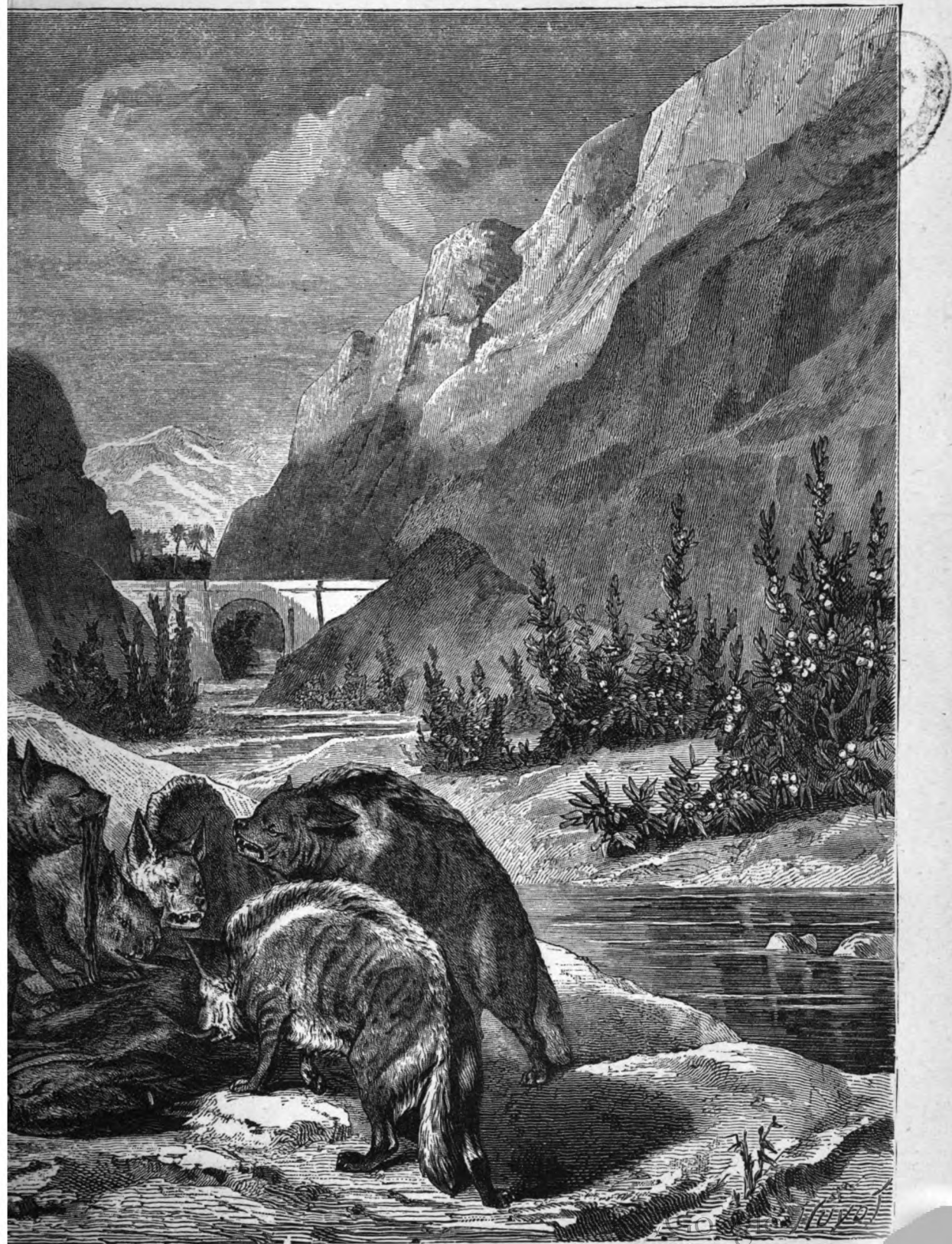
Whether they liked it or no, they ferried the whole of our expedition, including guns, stores, and ammunition across the river, with the exception of the cow, who swam over on her own account.

I stopped till the last, to make sure of nothing having been left behind; but when all the rest were safely landed on the farther bank, I, too, mounted my frog, and put off. No crocodiles had hitherto interrupted our proceedings; but doubtless the smell of the buffalo, as she swam across, attracted them, for several now made their appearance; and when I was in the middle of the current one of the brutes attacked me. The consequence was that I made the speediest passage by far for the frog struck out Webbfully, with the monster's jaws within snap of its hind legs, while I sat, revolver in hand, and gave the crocodile a pellet in its throat whenever it opened its mouth.

As it still followed, I put a shot into its left eye for a change; and that, apparently, did not suit its ideas of comfort, for it sank out of sight. Immediately afterwards my frog's head bumped up against the bank.









jumped ashore, drew the creature after me, and, taking out my burning glass, proceeded to melt away the gum which hermetically sealed its mouth. And as I am an enemy to unnecessary cruelty, I had a sufficient aperture to allow the air to escape melted out of the mouths

of all the frogs which had been inflated; after which they were placed with their heads to the sun, which by this time had gained sufficient power to liquefy the remaining gum, and set their jaws at complete liberty in a very short space of time.

Walrus Ways.



SPORT IN THE NORTH.

THERE is a gentleman among us who sets a capital example to those amateur seamen of our shores—the sailers of yachts. What they do in a purposeless, *dilettante* way, he does with a purpose; building sturdy yachts that can withstand the blows of sea or ice, sailing them to the Arctic Seas, and, while combining sport with his cruise, contriving that this sport shall fill a game-bag of great capacity and bulk, to pay the expenses of the voyage. This gentleman is Mr. Lamont, whose new work, “Yachting in the Arctic Seas,”* we now have before us, and can recommend it to all lovers of the adventurous as a book well worth reading.

Mr. Lamont spends too much time upon the seas to be a voluminous writer; and we only know him from a former little work, of a very unpretending nature.

* Chatto and Windus.

This was published in 1861, two years after the author had taken to Arctic voyaging. The book was called “Seasons with the Sea Horses;” and some idea of the love for his roaming life felt by the writer may be gleaned when we announce that Mr. Lamont gave up a seat in Parliament to enable him to carry out his expeditions without tie or trammel.

In his first voyage, the adventurer penetrated far into the mysterious North, but was stayed from further adventure by the frailty of his yacht. He had seen and felt enough, though, to excite in him desires for seeing more; and accordingly, being a wealthy man, he had built for him on the Clyde a vessel which he called the *Diana*, and got up on his own account a sort of amateur Arctic expedition. This huntress of the Arctic Seas—this new *Diana*—was, or is, a three-masted schooner, fitted with steam power, and built of the greatest strength, so as to resist the compression of

pack or the shocks of floe ice. She carried coal enough to keep her screw going for a trip of ten thousand miles, and, in addition, sailed admirably. Australian gumwood was used to sheathe her externally from its slippery qualities, and power of gliding through the ice; and to deal more vigorously with this northern enemy, the *Diana* carried an iron sternpiece, or chisel of iron, to split the blocks against which she might be hurled.

Provisions and gear, such as were found by experience to be the best for the purpose, were shipped in ample quantity; and in April, 1869, Mr. Lamont, with his gallant little crew, sailed from the Firth of Clyde, bound on his yachting trip to the Arctic Seas; and meaning, while shooting bear, to pay attention also to the abundant seals, the massive walrus, and the huge whale, from whose blubber, skin, bones, and tusks he hoped to recoup himself for some of the expenses of the trip.

The history of the voyage is very interesting, for Mr. Lamont's book is well written. He sailed first for Norway, where he secured six more sailors, men who were well accustomed to walrus hunting; but though, as a rule, he speaks well of the hardy Norsemen, these turned out to be sulky, lazy, mutinous, and generally unsatisfactory.

By May they had reached good hunting ground, and here preparations were made for the fight—boats painted white, so as to conceal them in their approach to their prey; spears and harpoons ground; lines and axes made ready; cartridges fitted for the harpoon gun; and all such necessary matters got over. Here, too, the "crow's-nest" was fitted up—the crow's-nest being a cask lashed above the cross-trees, and provided with ladder, trap-door, and seat, so as to enable its occupant to sit there and watch, protected from the icy winds, until such time as a walrus could be detected on the ice from this elevated look-out, when the word was given, boats started, and probably a walrus was bagged and dragged home to the ship.

It is dangerous sailing in these seas. There is much ice to encounter, and terrible storms. Often the course has to be steered through narrow lanes of water between the packed ice; and here it is that steam proves to be of such value, enabling the navigator to declare himself independent of wind or stream. Mr. Lamont's course was for Novaya Zemlya, and his wish was to force his way onward to the little known Kara Sea, which lies to the east and north of this huge ice-bound island. In this sea he expected to find an abundance of walruses; for the sea-horse has of late been so persecuted, that where it used to be seen in thousands, now only a few solitary specimens are to be found—the huge, unwieldy beasts gradually retreating before their persecutor, man, to more secure and retired regions. For the oil, skin, and tusks of these creatures form valuable spoils to the daring hunter—their oil being mixed with and sold as seal, their skins being well utilized, and their hard, firm, ivory tusks being largely used in manufactures.

Mr. Lamont's cruise was, on the whole, not very full of adventure; but by perseverance he forced his way, amongst ice-pack and field, beyond the extreme north of Spitzbergen, close to the Cloven Cliff, about the eightieth parallel of latitude—that is to say, within some six or seven hundred miles of the Pole; and then the weather—it being August—grew to be so bad, and

the position so dangerous, that the adventurous navigator determined that he could do no more that season, and the *Diana's* prow was turned for Norway.

"So ended," says Mr. Lamont, "in some respects an unlucky expedition; but I was convinced no human exertions could have accomplished more in discovery or exploration that season in the Spitzbergen Seas, owing to the persistently unfavourable lie of the ice. Had walruses been my only object, I might have had splendid sport by remaining in Novaya Zemlya; but, making a voyage in the first steamer that had visited this part of the Arctic Seas, I always considered it my first duty to prove that steam could carry us where sailing vessels were unable to go. This kept me restlessly hammering at the ice at every possible avenue to the unknown regions, and prevented my making a voyage remunerative in a sporting point of view.

"Still, our rapid movement from place to place largely added to my knowledge of the lie of ice in Spitzbergen and Novaya Zemlya, enabled me practically to test many theories broached in ignorance of existing conditions, and finally enabled me to enjoy months of exciting hunts, and days and nights, never to be forgotten, in earnest contemplation of some of the grandest and most interesting phenomena of nature. A long farewell, then, to those rugged cliffs and gale-swept shores, more and more shrouded each day in the mist and snows of winter, and the increasing darkness of the polar nights."

Mr. Lamont's expedition was unlucky, from his having hit upon a season when the ice lay thick; and consequently he did no more than catch a glimpse of the Kara Sea, and all his attempts to force his way in were fruitless. He fared no better in trying to reach the open sea said to be north of Spitzbergen. Everywhere the impenetrable barrier of ice was before him, and all he could do was to skirt the mighty obstacle. The great aim of his voyage was to do what the great expeditions had failed in doing; and he had hopes of thus showing, as he did, how much chance had to say in the matter; for he might hit upon a very open season, though he really did not. As far as sport went, however, he was most successful, gaining enough oil, ivory, and skins to go far towards paying the expenses of his voyage; and to the general reader these sporting portions will be found of the greatest interest.

Here is his description of a walrus hunt:—

"We are either sailing or steaming among 'likely ice,' with the captain or harpooner on the look-out in the crow's-nest. We, reading in the cabin or strolling on deck, are aroused by a few premonitory words—'Starboard!' 'Steady!' 'Hard-a-port!'—which show the look-out is using his telescope on some object of doubt, which turns out to be either 'black ice' or 'game.' If the latter, a sharp cry of 'Stop her,' and a familiar touch of the bell to the engine-room when steaming, or an order to 'Back fore-topsail' when sailing, puts all in a bustle. The men have tumbled over each other into the boat, as it is lowered and pushed off. I am usually so well prepared, and everything so ready to hand, that by the time I have taken a rifle from the stand the boat is ready to be lowered, with all her crew in, as I step in from the rail. My place is in the bows,

where I busy myself arranging my weapons or pushing away obstructive ice with a 'haak-pik.' On board, they watch us skimming along, as the sturdy Norwegians (fed on fish), or sturdier Britons (fed on beef), bend to their oars. Each man rows a short pair, stroke oar standing or kneeling on the thwart facing the others, and guiding the boat at his own discretion, or by watching the signals I give him, by pulling or backing either oar. Away we go, silently but swiftly; a few minutes seem to bridge the distance of two or three miles between the ship and our prey. As the boat nears the beasts, often asleep on the ice, the pulling is more wary. When very near, we all make ourselves as small as possible, while the boat-steerer alone, kneeling on the bottom boards, paddles the boat up to within harpooning distance—i.e., two or three fathoms. Now the harpooner, who has been watching his opportunity, peering over the gunwale, anxiously scans the beast; if still snorting, he may be pretty sure of getting fast. Quickly rising, he poises the harpoon, and a rapid thrust from a cool and skilful hand is sufficient to bury the harpoon beneath the tough hide of the walrus. If the harpoon holds well without drawing, the game may be reckoned as bagged."

The task is not done, though, when the harpoon is fixed; for the walrus makes bold efforts to escape, and if by chance two old bulls are harpooned together, matters may prove very serious for the crew. They may have, one or both, to be cut adrift, if they are dragging the boat along at full speed. An old bull may prove fierce, raise his bristly muzzle out of the water, displaying his two great glistening tusks, and attack the boat, capsizing it, or ripping a hole through its planks. For a bull walrus is no trifle as to size, weighing sometimes five thousand pounds. But the hunt is wonderfully exciting, especially when the great ten or eleven feet long monster is dragging a boat through the water at full speed; and we are told that it combines the excitement of the chase of the elephant, whale, and salmon in one. There are various ways of attacking the walrus. Sometimes he is shot dead while lying on the ice; and several may be secured in this way, under favourable circumstances, in a single morning. They are often, though, too wary, and the boat may have a hard chase after them. Mr. Lamont says:—

"In all my sporting experience, I never saw anything to equal the wild excitement of such a hunt. Five pairs of oars, pulled with utmost strength, make the boat seem to fly through the water; while, perhaps, a hundred walruses, roaring, bellowing, blowing, sporting, and splashing, make an acre of the sea all in a foam before and around her. The harpooner stands with one foot on the thwart and the other on the front locker, with the line coiled in the right hand, and the long weapon in both hands ready balanced for a dart; while he shouts to the crew which direction to take (as he, from standing upright in the boat, has a better opportunity of seeing the walruses under water).

"The herd generally keep close together, and the way in which they dive and reappear again simultaneously is remarkable. One moment you see a hundred grisly heads and long gleaming white tusks above the waves, they give one spout from their blow-holes, take one breath of fresh air, and the next moment you see a hundred brown hemispherical backs, the next a

hundred pair of hind flappers flourishing, and then they are all down.

"On, on goes the boat, as hard as ever we can pull the oars; up come the sea-horses again, pretty close this time; and before they can draw breath, the boat rushes into the midst of them—whish! goes the harpoon—birr! goes the line over the gunwale; and a luckless junger, on whom the harpooner has fixed his eye, is fast. His bereaved mother, snorting with rage, charges the boat, with flashing eyes; she quickly receives a harpoon in the back and a bullet in the brain, and hangs lifeless on the line. Now the junger begins to utter his plaintive, grunting bark, and fifty furious walruses close round the boat in a few seconds, rearing up breast-high in the water, and snorting and blowing as if they would tear us all to pieces. Two of these auxiliaries are speedily harpooned in their turn, and the rest hang back a little, when, as bad luck would have it, the junger gives up the ghost, owing to the severity of his harpooning, and the others, no longer attracted by his cries, retire to a more prudent distance. But for this untoward and premature decrease of the junger, the men told me we should have had more walruses on our hands than we could manage. This curious clannish practice of coming to assist a calf in distress arises from their being in the habit of combining to resist the attacks of the polar bear, which is said often to succeed in killing the walrus; if, however, Bruin, pressed by hunger and a tempting opportunity, is so ill-advised as to snatch a calf, the whole herd come upon him, drag him under water, and tear him to pieces with their long, sharp tusks."

Old harpooners vary, however, about the effect of the cry of the young on the old walrus. Some maintain that the cries of the young will frighten the elders away. Others declare that the best way to attract the walrus within shooting or harpooning distance is to get what they call a little boy, and stir him up now and then with a lance handle, making him howl and cry out till the old ones come to his help.

Mr. Lamont had a good deal of sport, too, with the reindeer; and he gives plenty of information on the stalking of this curious animal. He speaks with the voice of authority, for he shot a hundred during his cruise. The great white bears, too, were his quarry on many occasions. Mr. Lamont sets the Polar bear down as being the strongest and largest of the carnivora, but does not give him the credit for much pluck. Those in the Zoo give no idea of its strength and size. One he shot in Spitzbergen was eight feet long, and as much round, four feet and a half high at the shoulder, and he gave four hundred pounds of fat. Fancy that, ye lovers of genuine bear's-grease! His skin alone weighed one hundred pounds, and his whole weight was about sixteen hundred pounds. Various tales are told of the bear's strength—such, for instance, as that he will kill the great bull walrus, three or four times his size. His *modus operandi* is to lie in wait behind a lump of ice, and then spring upon the walrus, holding him by the skin of the neck with his teeth, while he batters in his skull with his paws. In spite of his strength, he becomes an easy prey to the sportsman, for a boat easily overtakes him when swimming, and he can be shot or caught amongst the loose ice. On the ice he

is more dangerous, and Mr. Lamont would not advocate an attack with a spear.

Shark-fishing, for the fine oil to be obtained from these creatures, was also practised largely; and—hear this, ye consumptives!—this oil is largely used for adulterating that obtained from the liver of the cod. The shark pursued is a long, lithe fellow, of about a dozen feet, and he is fished for with an ordinary line. He is readily hauled on board, stunned with a blow from a staff, the liver is cut out, the stomach inflated by blowing through a tube, and the carcass is thrown overboard. Thus treated, the shark does not sink. If he did, his relatives would feast upon him, instead of the seal blubber used as bait.

The finner whale, or rorqual, can be chased too; but in these seas a dangerous fellow this, best destroyed with a harpoon sent from a gun, or by means of an explosive shell. One gentleman is mentioned as having contrived a shell harpoon, weighing some twenty pounds, and this he fired from a steam launch. He has made his quest so successful that it has yielded him a large profit; the finner being easily met with, as it is not pursued by the regular whalers, on account of its dangerous properties, great size, and small yield of bone and oil.

In conclusion, let us recommend every one to obtain Mr. Lamont's book, not merely as something new from Mudie's, but as an admirable addition to the library; for it is a work to be kept, not returned. His various descriptions of sporting are all given in a straightforward, manly way, that bespeaks the honesty of the sailor; his accounts of the natural history products of the various northern lands are always entertaining, and one is never bored with dry scientific details. Altogether, it is to be hoped that if Mr. Lamont goes upon another of his bull hunts, bagging walrus worth a dozen sovereigns each, to pay his expenses, he may chance upon an open year, and reach even to the great North Pole, always providing that the laurels have not already been secured by Captain Nares and his companions, in whose expedition Mr. Lamont does not seem to have too much faith.

The Man in the Open Air.

IT is some years ago now that I obtained permission to angle in a piece of water not far from Windsor, one that is or was surrounded by densely planted trees and undergrowth, which scarcely permits the presence of the water to be known until one has pushed aside the entangled masses of foliage, and is close upon it.

The pond or lake had more of an artificial than a natural character, and from the gloom that surrounds it was by no means prepossessing, unless to those who liked the most refined solitude, served up with an extreme of dampness under foot, and dropping moisture from overhead. But of this I knew nothing the evening before my visit. It was enough that there existed water in a certain wood that had not been fished for years, and in which there might be heavy pike, to induce me to use "some influence at Court;" and off I repaired from London, to get a shake-down at a humble "public" not far from my angling destination.

I was alone, seated by a cosy fire, in a little parlour,

at the back of the house, which looked over an untidy yard, with its accompaniment of fowls and pigs, and while eating a dish of excellent bacon and eggs, I saw a well-dressed man, in deep mourning, with a white neckcloth on, step over the palings at the end of the yard, and make for the back door of the house. The next minute he had entered the room, and, taking a chair near the door, rang the bell, ordered hot whiskey and water, which he drank at a draught, and handed the glass to the slatternly waitress to be filled again. The second glass half finished, he looked around him, and noticed me and my tackle for the first time.

"Fishing?" he said, with a jerking tone.

"Yes," said I, equally sententious.

"Where?" said he.

"Black Park," said I.

"Black Park," said he, rising somewhat theatrically—"what gloomy, mysterious recollections does that name conjure up!"

"You know it, then?" said I, glad to get some information about it.

"I was a boy when first—unbidden and unlicensed—I got over the old lichen-covered palings of that solitary wood, and found myself alongside those dark and dreadful waters. I had often heard that few had dared to tread the solitary mazes of its hoary trees; and that those who had ventured had confessed that their souls were filled with undefinable dread, while moving noiselessly over the deeply bedded and sodden leaves which lie beneath the weird-like arms of its grim and stunted oaks and elms. The head-keeper and his watchers gave the widest berth to this pool. The hunted fox might have found a refuge there, for the hounds would sniff the air and howl as they passed within many yards of it; but even Reynard, to save his life, would double from its approaching darkness into light again, as if he preferred death in the open rather than security in its suspicious precincts. But its lake—hidden away, or rather concealing itself in the overhanging gloom—is, beyond expression, oppressive. In other woods, in other lakes, the roaring wind or soothing sigh is heard to tell the aching ear that "things around are mortal;" but on the sullen surface of these waters no ripple smiles, no wind-blast lashes it into fretful poutings, to beat itself into foam against its leeward banks. Not even a fleet of tiny corruscations disturbs this pitchy pool. Its impenetrable depths offer to the beholder only the dark and steely hue of a witches' mirror, tarnished here and there with a green slime, which gathers most copiously at the rusty grating, as if even that offensiveness would gladly escape from so filthy an enforced imprisonment. Not a flower or weed grows upon its banks, or touches its waters—all is dank, rotting vegetation around. The birds fly high overhead, or avoid it. Not a butterfly or sign of insect life is seen on or near it. The lichen-covered and stunted branches of the contorted trees lave not their tender stems below its surface, but twist and turn themselves in any other direction. The newt may lurk low down in its depths; the high-shouldered toad may sit shrugging itself in the consciousness of its individual dominion, enshrouded in eternal gloom. No—"

"But you speak of a grating," said I, here interrupting him. "The water cannot, then, be always stagnant?" I ventured to remark.

"The grating," observed he, "is but a cheat—a

mockery, which would suggest that there was liberty for the pent-up element beyond; but it leads to nowhere—in fact, up-hill. No; that would indeed be a redeeming feature in the place, would speak of movement and of life; but no sound of falling waters are there; but a voiceless silence seems to say, 'Here lie bones long sought, in this living tomb.'

"Do you think, then, that the place has seen deeds of horror in harmony with its surroundings?"

"Do I think? I know."

"I should much like to see this pool. I'll go at once."

"Stay!" cried he, rising from his seat. "How can you see where all is dark, impenetrable, black?—a darkness aided by its kin, the dark-leaved mistletoe, glossy holly, and blackthorn, its Nemesian guardians; a darkness palpable and tangible, that cannot retreat, and which the courage of the bravest daunts; a darkness which even the owl flies through with screeches of alarm; a darkness jealous of heaven's light, in which a sunbeam of infinite thinness would be lost; no moonbeam, though straight overhead, can with a silver thread penetrate its shade."

"How do you know all this?" I inquired, thinking it best to humour a man who was evidently either stage or moon-struck.

"How do I know it? I'm the only mortal that ever penetrated its fastnesses, or had the courage to follow its soppy, moss-grown banks throughout their course. The old keeper, Jerry, left me long before we had reached the pen-stock; and ere he fled—

'A deadly fear o'er all his vitals reigns,
And his chill'd blood hung curdled in his veins.
Terror froze up his hair, and on his face
Show'rs of cold sweat roll'd trembling down apace.'

No bribe will lure the woodman to raise an axe within its precincts. Where the tree falls, there it lieth. Not a mark of mortal footstep would its Crusoe find there. No voice—not a water-rat; not a cry, but once."

"But once?"

"Yes; the shriekings of a woman, and the wailings of a child."

And he threw down the money for his grog, made for the yard, and was over the palings into the fir plantation before I could recover from the surprise which his words had occasioned.

The Egotist's Note-book.

LORD DERBY says of the intentions of the Government, and no doubt every word was well weighed and considered: "They will adhere under all circumstances, and whatever happens, to the principle of maintaining the integrity of the Turkish Empire; that under no circumstances whatever shall a single inch of ground that belonged to Turkey cease to belong to her." Then heaven help the poor Christians of Turkey in Europe! It is enough to make one feel ashamed of being an Englishman.

Mr. Forbes gives a very ugly account of the state of affairs in connection with the hospital work of the Serbian army. He says:—"There is a dead-lock about the English hospital in Belgrade. Baron Munday will

send in no wounded until certain requisites are complied with in the construction and fittings. There is no man here with authority to do this, nor any money for the purpose. Dr. Laseron, who was appointed superintendent, has been sent to Vienna to buy stores. The British consul has money to maintain the hospital when in operation, but none to supply these preliminary requisites. Meanwhile the hospital is unfinished and unoccupied." In a later telegram, he states that at last a few beds are now ready, and one patient is there—to wit, a little boy who has blown himself up with fireworks. The best advice to the wounded men, under the circumstances, is that they should tie up their own wounds with the red tape that lies tangled about the place.

So, according to Mr. Baring's report, Achmet Agha, the hero of the massacre of Batak, has been decorated with the order of the Medjidie—the highest honour *à la Turc*. Former holders of the decoration must feel proud of their new brother. Cannot a visit to England be arranged for this illustrious Mussulman? We should be very glad to see him, and he might like to inspect some of the wonders of our busy hive. One could not take him through our prisons, for the occupants might feel insulted; but even as they once showed their delight at the visit of Marshal Haynau, the *employés* in Southwark would no doubt be very glad to see friend Achmet at Barclay and Perkins's brewery, and let him taste their cheer.

Mr. Coleman's revival of "Henry V." is certainly a magnificent spectacle, and deserves to be a great success. One of the *tableaux*, that of the Battle of Agincourt, is something to be seen; but the playgoer will miss the falcon ballet, danced by young ladies in wings, feathers, and talons. It was meant to be very taking, but it was inexpressibly droll; and the more so that this bird dance was presided over by Miss Fowler, in the character of the Princess Katharine.

By a notice, it is ordered that an officer's servant, when authorized to accompany an officer proceeding on leave of absence, will be permitted to draw an allowance of 6d. per day in lieu of rations. This munificence is staggering. It is too much! The army will be flooded with eager recruits, all wishing to become officers' servants. Sixpence a-day in lieu of rations! Why, the men will all become Claimants in corpulence—though, by the way, it seems that this gentleman is greatly reduced.

Yes; we learn that the Claimant has become an adept with the sewing machine, that he has had his knickerbockers altered several times, and that he is reduced seventeen inches in girth. Happy man! In addition, he has to rise at five o'clock in the morning—rather early; but, as he beds at eight, nine hours' sleep should cause no complaint.

After the pretty little *exposé* in the *Times*, slate pencils will cease to be spirit-moved. But is it not wonderful that we can go on abusing King James for believing in witches, and yet have large capacities for swallowing the marvellous ourselves? Without cavilling about the discussion at the British Association, or the mum-

meries of mediums, why is it that this so-called psychic force is not calmly investigated, and some effort made to reduce it to law and order? That there is "something in it," there can be no doubt; for it is folly to imagine that we have learned all that Mother Nature has to teach. Some curious stories are told of the past, but nothing so marvellous as we accept now, and employ under the name of electricity.

What is the meaning of this accident in Scotland, wherein Mr. Allsopp is the guest of Mr. Bass—or the reverse, I do not remember which—and, like Peter of old, they go a-fishing? The boat is upset, and they are nearly drowned. Now, does this mean a rivalry; and did Bass try to drown Allsopp, or Allsopp Bass? Saints forefend!—for Bass and Allsopp are lovely in their ways, and need no water. No, I suppose it was an accident pure and simple, so let me say blessings on Anderson, who brought them safe to land. England without Bass and Allsopp would be—Ah, stay, stay—such a horror is not to be thought of!—it is worse than Bulgarian to a thoughtful man.

A Madrid pamphleteer proposes to tunnel the Straits of Gibraltar, and unite Europe and Africa, while turning the flank of the fortress of Gibraltar, on the English occupation of which the Spaniards have long looked with an evil eye. He suggests that the passage should commence between Tarifa and Algeiras on the Spanish, and between Ceuta and Tangiers on the African side. The submarine part of this tunnel would be little more than a third of the length of that between England and France; but in connection with the submarine way under the Channel, it would, as its projector points out, allow of an overland railway route to India without change of carriage. Why shilly-shally? As we have arrived at such a pitch in connection with the tunnel, would it not be as well to join hands with Brother Jonathan, and go under the Atlantic at once? Say the Anglo-American Tunnel Company, in two billion shares of twenty-five pounds each.

A verdict of manslaughter has been found against the Wellow station-master, for his conduct anent the Radstock accident. But what could the railway company expect, when they chose Sleep for the duty of station-master on a single line of rails? They might just as well have selected Death for master at the next station—Radstock—instead of Jarrett.

The story of the meteor which fell at Windsor is then, after all, only of the cock and hen breed, and resolved itself into electric fluid, where no pieces could be found. Rather dangerous for her Majesty's slates if meteoric stones really did fall!

Two old men of seventy—twins—were accused before the Leeds magistrates of the heinous offence of sleeping out, instead of at an hotel or the casual ward. Fortunately for them, they came before sensible justices, and were discharged. It is astonishing, though, that men can be so wicked, and at threescore and ten.

One cannot help being an enemy to the whole custom adopted, with certain honourable exceptions, at our theatres. The system of licensed brigandage, by which

a playgoer is pestered to leave coat, umbrella, cloak, bonnet, or shawl; charged for a bill of the fare to be laid before him; importuned to hire opera glasses, footstools, and the like—why not the very cushions?—has long been the theme of the satirist's pen. But very little has been said concerning the *claque*—that hired system of applause, whose workers so blunderingly contrive to applaud at the wrong moment. An amusing instance of the barefaced audacity of this system occurred at one of the principal theatres. It was during the performance of one of the celebrated Italians who lately visited our shores. A couple of box-keepers had been for some time annoying the occupants of the stalls by keeping up a continuous conversation in a low tone, when one of them, hearing a pause in the speech of the principal character, suddenly recollected a part of his duty and burst out into a series of frantic "*Bravos!*" accompanied by tremendous clapping of the hands. I can guarantee that he had not heard a word of the play for some time; and as to the plaudits, they were given at anything but the best time.

Apocryphal of the terrible cases of suffocation in wells which are so often reported—cases made more sad by the brave fellows who try to assist losing their own lives—a correspondent of the *Times* makes a very simple and matter-of-fact suggestion. Of course, death ensues from the foul air, or carbonic acid gas, that is generated, and lies just above the water. The *Times* correspondent says the difficulty is met by using a pair of blacksmith's forge bellows, attaching a long hose to their nozzle that will reach nearly to the water, and then pumping the well full of fresh air. This never fails; but the supply must be kept up. It is a wonder that labourers do not more frequently test the air by lowering a lighted candle, knowing as they do, or ought, that where a candle will not burn man cannot exist.

One of the feats performed at Myers's great circus is that of John Cooper, who places his head right inside an elephant's mouth, which is closed over it as if it were a gooseberry. On seeing this certainly dangerous trick, the question arises what would the consequence be if the elephant sneezed? Would it fracture John Cooper's skull? It is not a pleasant feat, for the keeper's head comes out very hot, moist, and unpleasant; moreover, the animal has to have his trunk punched before he will open his mouth sufficiently for the head to be withdrawn. It is, however, a new sensation, and some few might like to try it.

THE season has arrived when every one is thinking of turning from the sultriness of town life to the pleasures of a country tour. Ladies who take very little exercise when at home, with true British courage often undertake long and tedious journeys. It is of the highest importance, under such circumstances, that the clothing should in no way impede the proper circulation of the blood, but especially should the old but bad practice of gartering the leg be avoided. Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London, has provided the only means of remedying this in his New Patent Stocking Suspender, which he will send by post for 2d. extra. The prices are—Children's, 1s. 6d.; maids', 2s.; ladies', 3s. Our advice is to write at once for a pair.

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Dyes and Dyeing.



M.R. JUDSON deserves the thanks of the lady portion of the British public for the facilities he has given all lovers of colour for indulging in the pleasure afforded to the eye by the wondrous tints

of Nature. He, perhaps, it is who can answer the question we are about to propound.

Who first conceived the idea of fixing the beautiful, fleeting colours that we see around us in flower, in bird, or the ever-changing sky? One might safely say that it was one of the softer sex, for the adornment of her person. And yet, in nature, it is not always the lady who puts on the fine garb at the season of making love. With birds, it is the gentleman whose plumes grow bright, while those of the lady are quiet and sober.

It is a question one cannot follow; but certainly, at some very early date, the idea must have occurred to a barbarous brain, that if he or she could transfer the bright hues seen upon some flower to his or her person, how envious the companions would be. It may be from this that the Ancient Britons stained themselves blue with woad—a plant still to be found in our land, though gone out of use for dying purposes since indigo began to reign. Accident—no doubt, the rubbing together of the leaves—may have suggested the staining properties, even as one has often thought, when looking at the fingers and lips of some pretty damsel out a-blackberrying, what a goodly purple dye is there—even as, in walnut-time, the ripened husks give out a fine, dusky, olive brown of the true gipsy tint. The old verse says—

“Come, stain your cheek with nut or berry,
You'll find the gipsy's life is merry.”

Doubtless it is, in fine weather; but though we have hit upon the nut, what berry would be used has not come within range of our botanical research.

The dye that has become most famous is of course the Tyrian; and accident again must have shown the ancients that this, their regal purple, was contained in the soft body of a common shell-fish, the murex; and

this colour is so intense and powerful as a dye that a naturalist, in making experiments with various molluscs of the family, found it stain his fingers so that the colour was retained for five weeks.

Endless, as the idea grew, must have been the attempts to express the juices of bright-coloured flowers—the scarlet of the poppy, the yellow of the buttercup, and the many brilliant tints of other plants—in most cases without success, even as failure must have attended any effort to retain the gorgeous hues upon the plumage of so many tropical birds. One instance, though, might be cited, where an intense yellow dye was obtained from a bird; but this was in the comparatively modern times of two years ago, when at various local canary shows a gentleman always took the prizes for richness of colour. It occurred, though, to one of the judges to moisten a pocket handkerchief and pass it over the feathers, with the result that the linen became yellow too, with the jaundiced hue produced by some vegetable dye. The prize awarder, if we recollect right, called the exhibitor's act an error of judgment; but no errors of judgment were made respecting the disqualified birds.

Dyeing seems to have been a very ancient practice, and to have grown into a regular trade amongst the more commercial people. Egyptian, Greek, and Roman have all left us traces—the Roman even at Pompeii, where shells of the murex were found containing the purple extracted from the fish. The Israelites probably borrowed the art from Egypt, to colour the ram-skins, dyed red, which were used to embellish the tabernacle—with what material, though, it is hard to say, probably from some vegetable; for it is not likely that the wonderful colour-bearing insect was known to them. Of course, allusion is here made to the pretty, silvery, grey-green beetle that we know as cochineal, gathered from a kind of cactus, cultivated for the purpose in Mexico, and in use there for dyeing purposes long before the discovery of the west by our early navigators.

Experiment must have aided accident, for the names of the materials that have been used at various times to colour clothing or work up into pigments are legion:—Sea-weed, moss, from which come archil, &c.; the inkbag of the cuttle fish or squid; and, above all, the chips of the trees commonly classed as dyewoods, and mostly of foreign origin—such as logwood, bas-wood, peachwood, and sumach—foreign these, though the home products, alder, heather, and walnut, were often used.

As a rule, these colours were pretty in tint, one or two were bright, and doubtless the scarlet dye used by the gallants of Elizabeth's Court to stain their beards added wonderfully to the noble aspect of the mincing fops; but there was something wanting, and that was brilliancy. To attain this, repeated immersions were tried, but the effect was only to darken the stain; and it was not till many brains had studied the matter and experimentalized that the great strides were made, and men learned to imitate the brilliant hues with which nature adorns objects animate and inanimate—the peacock's tail, the newly fractured side of a piece of copper ore, the iridescent interior of a shell, or the sky at morn or eventide.

The chemist was wanted, and with him came the great change. The dyer's art spread, and the fair sex

had their highest-coloured aspirations gratified. The men of salts taught their combination with vegetable or animal dyes, either to vivify colour or to make it fast: Copperas, so called because it is a salt of iron, was given, useful for black—it is in the ink with which this article is written, in combination with the juice of the nutgall of the oak tree; bichromate of potash, to help form brown; tin and acids, hydrochloric or nitric, to aid sumach and fustic, make a rich red; alumina and lead. Iron, though, in the form of its sulphate, is one of the commonest and most useful chemicals in the dyer's art.

Several of the ordinary dye-stuffs have been mentioned, and many shelved, from their infinite variety; but there are a few that may be named before attention is drawn to what may be called the chemist's triumph in colours, by which quite a revolution was made, and that during the past few years. Shellac, a produce of an insect—not the insect itself, like cochineal—is used in reds; safflower, saffron, and other woods give yellows or reds. Turmeric, too, is a well-known old-fashioned yellow, as annatto is a buff; but perhaps the finest, softest buff is that seen in the delicate, old-fashioned, nature-dyed cotton that used to be so popular as nankeen. Who remembers the delicate nankeen trousers of the Bond-street and St. James's-street bucks some fifty years ago?

But, speaking of years ago, what experiments used to be tried in economical households in the way of dyeing! Who does not remember that wonderful institution, the pink saucer, which used to be bought at the chemist's for the purpose of dyeing the veils or neckerchiefs of the family; how so much water was added, how so long a time was observed by the clock for the steeping, and how they came out and dried afterwards such horribly faded, wishy-washy hues, that even the most sanguine termed them failures? But that was before the advent of Judson's dyes.

Then, too, there were the children's straw hats that were to be dyed black in a wonderful *bouillon* of log-wood chips, whose broth certainly did turn the straw of a fine purply black, and, in spite of every care, the operator's hands as well, so that they laughed lightly at soap and water, and had to be worn in gloves. Gloves, too, what experiments were made with them, only they would dye inside as well as out; and woe be to the economical maiden who rubbed her face with a darkened glove upon a humid summer's day.

Speaking of chemicals, though, and their effect upon animal tissue, perhaps the most singular is that produced by nitrate of silver—known more commonly as lunar caustic—a touch from which will stain, or rather burn, the skin of an intense black. This forms the base of that household dye which we know as marking ink; but its most singular effect is when taken in any large or continued quantity as a medicine. The skin of the patient, or the sub-cutaneous tissue, becomes then of a ghastly bluish tint, and immunity from suffering is only produced at the sacrifice of personal appearance.

The triumph of chemistry as applied to colour was undoubtedly in the discovery of the aniline dyes which lay hidden in that useful household commodity, coal. Hints of their beauty were afforded now and again, when the sun shone on the bright side of newly fractured pieces of coal; better still, when a drop of tar

had been melted by the sun from the side of some canal barge, and the oil from the tar spread in rainbow tints upon the surface of the water; but it was not until lately, in the rage for economizing and using up waste substances, that the coal tar refuse produced in the manufacture of gas was seized upon by the chemist, who, as the result of his experiments, found in the dingy, sticky tar a variety of constituents, the most remarkable of which were benzole and aniline.

With the benzole we have nothing to do here; suffice it that it has become of great commercial importance.

The aniline it is that has given us the wondrous

ance. list of delicious—the term is really applicable to that which so delights the eye—delicious colours that the Judson firm have brought so prominently before the public, enabling every lady to be her own dyer—colours that have stained our silks and other fabrics: the delicate peachy mauve; the regal magenta, with its purply crimson; the aniline purple, richer than any Tyrian dye could possibly have been; the elegant *bleu de Paris*; the carmine-hued roseine; with the other colours that suggest their own tints—violet, emeraldine, and azuline: colours these so lovely that they might all have been skimmed from the surface of a crystal sea when the sunbeam tinges the sides of its rippling waves at early morn; washed from the iridescent scales of that living silver, a shoal of mackerel; or carefully prepared by melting down for dyeing purposes the ruby, the amethyst, the sky-tinged sapphire, or the marine chrysolite, and wine-flashed topaz.

No mention has been made of mordants, those chemicals used in fixing colours in calico dyeing or printing, or in removing a portion of the dye to produce a pattern. Space forbids an exhaustive treatise, and we must again turn to the ludicrous side of dyeing, for it has its strange aspects; though for the sufferer there must have been little of the ludicrous attached to the accident, when he fell head over heels into a dye vat, fortunately not very hot, but heated enough to colour him a most vivid blue—a tint he chose to maintain until it wore off, sooner than expose his skin to the action of such chemicals as would have discharged the colour.

There has been a French play popular, too, of late, in which the heroine, the daughter of a dyer, had an involuntary bath in one of her parent's vats. But this is fiction. It is truth that chemicals are sold whose property it is, not to colour the cheek of the fair—and weak—as a pigment, like rouge or carmine, but to give it a rosy blush that will not wash away after the fallow bleaching process of ill health or exposure to gaslight in hot, ill-ventilated rooms. Allusion may be made also to the dye or mordant by which the fashionable colour of fair Saxon yellow is given to the flowing tresses of the fashionable dame. The ordinary dye has been relegated to those of the stronger sex who, rejecting the crown of glory given by nature, seek to give their hair the tints of youth, and make it purply black or rusty brown at their will. Of course, the drawback to all this is that the hair will grow; and this reminds one of the gentleman deerstalking in the Highlands, who had to tarry there, not until his beard had grown, for it had grown too fast, but till a bottle or two of some famous dye had been sent down to enable him to relieve his face of its piebald aspect, black being the colour

of the tips of his hair, while the roots kept growing grey.

Perhaps, though, the most ludicrous side of dyeing for fashion's sake is in its application to horses. The Shah of Persia had his made gorgeous with colour. We confine ourselves to black, for the sake of the undertakers' supply; it being no unusual thing to give some grey-splashed, white-stockinged, or star-foreheaded animal, a facing of hot logwood dye, to put him what the ostlers call in mourning for hearse or funeral carriage.

There are strange changes in life. A poet compares it to a circle: we begin at birth, work round, and join the starting-point at death. Truly, too, fashion is a circle; far back we find that savages dyed themselves: we have worked round to the point that, in these days of the highest civilization, the most cultivated do the same. Henry S. Leigh, in one of his humorous poems, treats it as a gage thrown down to time, after the fashion of La Garde at Waterloo. He says:—

"Go, on, destroyer! You destroy,
And Art shall be the mender.
Grey hair? I'll get a wig, my boy,
Or dye, and not surrender!"

Sir Salar Jung.

A DISTINGUISHED gentleman has been in our midst, who might well be regarded as the guest of the British nation, but who went about quietly, mingling with us in our public entertainments, receiving the courteous attention of English men and women, who gladly recognized in him a friend to this country, and one who, at a critical time, did us good and faithful service.

There was a time—a very dark time in our annals—when the unfriendliness of Salar Jung would have been to us a terrible blow.

His quick decision stood us in good stead, when hesitation was unfriendliness, and when anything at all like doubt would have been virtual opposition. He made up his mind, at once and conclusively, and that decision involved the loyalty and good faith of the Nizam's dominions. He has had reason to be dissatisfied with us; but he recognizes, in common with nearly all India, the rough sense of justice and rectitude that underlies so much that undoubtedly is meretricious in British rule. "You will do right," he has all but said, "when you see it to be right."

We should do well to remember that we have not been dealing with a savage or a man of an effete race, but with one of acute intellect; with a man who, if we were right, was also right in 1857, and right in a very different sense from ours; for he was against his people for what he saw to be the dominant fact, while we were merely for our people on the principle of English pluck. Sir Salar Jung, be it observed, did not come on an idle tour. He is not a pleasure-seeker, but one who has his mind fixed upon State affairs.

We hope he was met frankly, as gentlemen meet gentlemen, and that he has been told that we comprehend his great efforts for the benefit of his people, and for the well-being of the British empire. There is no doubt the representation of India in Parliament is a question merely of time, and, though it has to be fought

for, as England has had to fight for her liberties, the end is as certain as England's has been.

He came to us representing a great cause—a real grievance, a great loyalty, and a good faith which is memorable in history.

There is no doubt whatever that he came for State purposes, and that those purposes are of a grave and serious nature. To Englishmen, it seems a light matter to annex territories in India. When Oude was declared to be British, there was scarcely, on that account, a ripple on the sea of English life; yet it was a large, renowned, and ancient kingdom that had passed away, and large and excitable populations were concerned in the change of rule.

In bamboo huts, under the shadow of some of the most elegant palaces in the world, men sat and smoked, and talked of the perfidy of the sahibs, who had by a stroke of the pen taken to themselves the great kingdom whose fame was intertwined with that of the great Rama himself. To us Lucknow is but a name, and would not even have been so much, if the Mutiny had not forced on us, in connection with Lucknow, heroisms that never can die.

To the natives of Oude, and of more than Oude, Lucknow is the chief city of a great kingdom whose origin is lost in the mists of antiquity. And so in the case of the Nizam's dominions. Sir Salar Jung has appealed from English officialism in the East to English justice in England, and appealed on questions that concern millions of people, and that are watched by millions more.

When India has some sort of representation in the House of Commons, many questions which history has accepted as settled will be reconsidered. Perhaps even reputations also will be reconsidered, and dealt with in a summary way. At all events, there will be a hearing for the side of populations which we talk of as dumb, but which, in their own way, are among the most voluble in the world. The sound of their voices does not reach England, but there is no question of public affairs on which they do not express opinions, and opinions which have effect in human life.

Sir Salar Jung took the only means known at present in the East of making the responsible ministers of England acquainted with facts. We trust he has been successful in his mission, so far as it accords with that which we have said is believed by all such men to be one of the characteristics of British rule in India—a rough sense of justice where justice is perceived, a disposition on the whole to do right, not wrong, and an aptitude to reconsider and retrace false steps.

Lines Picked up at a Rink.

UPON the rink the lady sat,
Beside her lay her dainty hat,
All crumpled;
She looked the picture of distress,
So dusty was her pretty dress,
And rumpled.

"I can't get up," in faltering tone,
She said. I thought that, perhaps, alone
She would not.
I picked her up. She was not hurt—
'Twas but the tightness of her skirt—
She could not!

Roses on the Brink.

BY WILLIAM SAWYER.

CHAPTER XLI.—ANOTHER INTERVIEW.

THE rain, falling heavily all next day, had left the trees in St. James's Park dripping with wet. Gusts at intervals sent the rain-drops pattering down on the gravel paths. As evening closed in gloomily, the scene presented was a miserable and depressing one, more especially for the few poor wretches who huddled together on the seats, clutching wet rags to a wet skin, in the hope of getting warmth out of them, and dangling wet, muddy feet, benumbed with cold.

Uncomfortable as was the time, a solitary figure, distinct in appearance from the homeless outcasts, lingered in the least frequented path. It was the figure of a young girl, closely veiled, closely muffled up from head to foot, as much for disguise as for shelter from the inclement weather.

To and fro, to and fro the young girl paced, under the trees, with an impatience not to be controlled, and quite unmistakable in her every movement.

"Will he come?—will he come?" she more than once exclaimed aloud, clasping her hands in a fervour of agitation.

As she spoke, her eyes glanced eagerly in every direction, and it was clear that her anxiety was intense.

It was not relieved when a figure appeared at the end of the walk, and she made towards it, only to discover that she had been mistaken, and to turn hastily back. But the steps she had taken had compromised her in the eyes of the man who was approaching, and who was one of those idle loungers at all public places, who are the terror of young and unprotected women.

"You are waiting for some one, dear?" said this individual, who had a military gait, a mendaciously false wig, and nothing else to commend him, as he came up; "can I be of any assistance to you?"

"None, thank you," returned an agitated voice.

"It's lonely wandering here alone, isn't it?" the man persisted.

"Not at all, thank you," was the answer.

"But, pardon me, it must be," said the fellow. "How inconsiderate of your friend to keep you waiting on such an evening—so cold and unpleasant. And, my goodness, such a pretty girl, too!"

He had come quite close, and was peering through her veil with bleared, wicked old eyes. Frightened at his boldness, the girl knew not what to do or say, and, perceiving her agitation and helplessness, the stranger coolly put his arm about her waist.

"Leave me, sir, leave me," she exclaimed, fiercely, tearing at his arm in a futile attempt to remove it. "Oh, help! help!"

The help came in the form of a blow from a stick, which sent the stranger reeling across the path, bald-headed, his hat and wig dancing merrily off before a gust, which at that moment was swaying the trees from their very roots.

"Oh, Edmund!" cried the girl thus suddenly rescued. "You are come. I am so glad!"

"It seems that I did not come a moment too soon, Eva, dear," returned Edmund Harcourt—for it was he—"that ruffian had already insulted you."

The ruffian in question was making off—gladly, no doubt—in frantic pursuit of his lost wig; and the sight of him, bald, decrepid, and sneakingly crestfallen, could hardly fail to provoke a smile.

"I care for nothing now you are here," said Eva Knowles. "You see, I came at your bidding. You expressed a wish, and I am here."

"Thank you, dear girl," returned Harcourt; "I knew that I could trust your generous heart, and that you would forgive my bringing you here on such a night, when you heard how necessary it was that we should meet. Eva, I am most unhappy."

"You have my truest sympathy," she replied.

"I should have," he said; "for it is chiefly on your account that I am perturbed. Fate itself seems leagued against our happiness. Your father's misfortunes were trifles; I could even have rejoiced in them because they gave me the opportunity of showing the disinterestedness of my affection."

"Ah, yes; I knew you would feel thus!" Eva exclaimed, with fervour.

"I was glad for my own sake," he went on, "when the news of successive losses came to my ears. You will bear me witness that from first to last I have never varied in my attentions—have never allowed ill-fortune to raise the slightest barrier between us."

"You have not, Edmund; you *could* not. I am sure of it!"

He did not feel it necessary to explain that his conduct had been shaped by the accident of Randolph Agnew's overhearing, while hiding behind the hedge at Peckham, that the family losses had been exaggerated purposely to deceive him and expose his mercenary intentions.

"The time has come," he said, "when the objections which members of your family have taken to me are likely to take a most serious form, and therefore it was necessary that I should see you and put you on your guard. It is my misfortune to have enemies. These are bitter and unscrupulous. They have dogged me for years, and it is not likely that they should fail in their enmity at a time when they see me on the threshold of happiness."

"It might, then, have been one of these who attempted your life in the street?"

"It was, Eva; I admit it. I did not care to take others into my confidence on this point, but from you I can have no secrets. You will not let the fact of my having such a foe prejudice you against me?"

"Impossible!"

"But now more especially I want to warn you against what is certain to happen—a determined effort to blacken my character, and to break off all between us. You heard the letter of Aunt Effra? You saw the effect it produced?"

"I did."

"To-morrow, as I understand, you expect that lady home, after the ill-considered match into which she has been betrayed?"

"Yes."

"She will come with a malicious delight, full of this subject. The man who has deceived her I know well. Circumstances have thrown us together, and have made us bitterest foes. He is an Italian, vengeful by nature, and with an imagination teeming with horrors. Doubtless, he has poured into the ears of that deceived

woman a tissue of falsehoods, and it is against these that I wish to prepare you—to warn you.”

“Depend on me,” returned Eva, with eagerness. “I will give a deaf ear to them—one and all.”

“And you will not be influenced by anything to my prejudice until I have first had the opportunity of explaining it, and so of clearing my character?”

“No; I promise this.”

“That is all I ask. And I ask it for your sake as well as my own, seeing that Aunt Effra—who has always foolishly set herself up as your rival—would like nothing better than that you should fail in realizing your married happiness, as she has failed in realizing hers.”

“And she has failed? You know this?” Eva asked.

“I am assured of it. Marco—as he is called—is utterly worthless and abandoned. A mere adventurer, with no object in life but to secure the means of living on the property of his unhappy wife.”

“It is very sad,” the girl answered. “With all her crotchets, aunty has many good qualities; and I cannot endure the idea of the shame and degradation which she has wilfully brought upon herself.”

“Just so; but we must not think of this. Let me only add, dearest Eva, that whatever may transpire, however I may be maligned, or what abuse soever may be heaped upon me, I am always your earnest and devoted adoror. I love you, Eva, with every fibre of my heart; I shall do so until that heart has ceased to beat.”

He took her hand, and raised it to his lips with chivalric courtesy, and also with an assumption of deep feeling.

Eva answered the appeal, as it was natural for a woman to do. She grasped his hand fervently in her own, and tears glittered between the meshes of her veil.

“I will never think unworthily of you,” she murmured.

There was a pause, during which Harcourt was evidently revolving something of moment in his mind.

He was, in truth, hesitating at a bold step.

Affairs had gone so crossly with him that he saw little chance of success, even to the extent of finding means for his own support, unless by having recourse to some desperate measure. Had his means been equal to his audacity, he would not have hesitated a moment. As it was, he had to weigh circumstances and calculate chances to an extent that was absolutely painful.

After a short time, however, he decided on the course he would pursue, and having decided, lost no time in communicating his views to his companion.

“Eva, darling,” he said, “has it occurred to you that the obstacles to our union are of such a nature that it seems almost impossible to overcome them?”

She looked wonderingly in his face.

“Papa is all that is kind and generous to me,” she said.

“True,” was the reply; “but for all that, depend on it, he will throw every obstacle in our way. He has objections to me; his mind has been poisoned, and will be yet further poisoned; and what will be the result? He will forbid our meeting. He will refuse his consent. Then all will be over between us.”

He said this so dismally, that Eva felt her heart sink within her at the prospect.

“Oh, you cannot think it will come to this?” she pleaded.

“I see no other prospect.”

“I have greater faith in papa’s love for me.”

“You will be deceived. There is but one resource—”

“Ha! What is that?”

He paused before answering.

“You will not be offended?” he said.

“That is impossible.”

“Listen, then. Were the irrevocable step taken—were we man and wife—objections, rumours, impediments of all sorts would fly like chaff before the wind. Nothing could separate us, and the efforts of others would be directed against our happiness in vain.”

He looked cautiously at the veiled face, to watch the effect of this insidious suggestion.

Eva looked grave.

“You propose a secret marriage?” she asked.

“Rather, it proposes itself. Circumstances so shape themselves that it seems inevitable.”

“But if we should wait, could you not satisfy all papa’s scruples, and vindicate your character against the most unjust aspersions?”

“Undoubtedly—if we should wait, Heaven knows how long! But see what advantages the other course presents. A secret marriage is nothing. If necessary, it can be kept secret: no one will be any the wiser. A second public marriage can take place, as if nothing had before happened. If, on the other hand, we find difficulties insurmountable—if we find it impossible to carry our point by fair means, there will be this to fall back upon, and to set our enemies—no, no, I will not say enemies, but those conscientiously opposed to us—wholly at defiance.”

“But if my father should never forgive me?” Eva urged.

“Nonsense, child. Fathers are not so foolish as to quarrel with what is inevitable. When the time came, forgiveness would come with it.”

She heard, but still hesitated.

“Give me till to-morrow,” she said.

“What! Till you have listened to Aunt Effra’s farago of scandalous rumours?”

“They will not affect me. I have promised you to believe nothing to your disadvantage. To-morrow, love. And now it is time that I returned. I shall, even now, scarcely reach home before the last dinner bell.”

Offering no resistance, Edmund Harcourt gave her his arm, and they moved out at the park gate. On the outside they had no difficulty in securing a passing cab. Eva was carefully placed in it, the driver receiving instructions from Harcourt to convey her home with all speed.

As the cab drove off, and as Harcourt turned to go in the direction of Westminster, he was amazed to find himself face to face with Marco. The Italian was smartly attired, in spite of the day, and carried himself with all the confidence—amounting to insolence—which he had lately assumed.

“You have been watching me?” Harcourt demanded, in an angry tone.

“Not you—the lady.”

“It is like your audacity. How dare you do it?”

“If you ask my motive, I simply wished to speak with you when the lady found it agreeable to withdraw.”

"To speak to me?"

"Yes."

"About what?"

"To give you a piece of information—about yourself."

"Eh? What has happened?"

"The police have been applied to for a warrant for your apprehension."

"On what charge?"

"The murder of your wife and child."

Harcourt reeled, and caught at Marco's arm to save himself from falling.

"Where—where did they get the clue?" he gasped.

"From certain papers."

"What papers?"

"Some in my possession."

"What! You have played the traitor, have you?"

"No. Those papers were stolen from me; but I hear to what purpose they have been applied, and I come to warn you. Come with me. It will be possible to secure your safety by flight."

"Or hiding in the secret rooms of the old house?"

"No, there is no longer safety in the old place. It is too closely watched. But I have another retreat for you. I shall have the pleasure of introducing you to my very good friend, Mrs. Dormer-Paget. Come!"

As he drew the amazed and terrified Harcourt away, his saturnine face bore the expression it had worn that night when he placed Zerina in the care of those who had so faithlessly guarded her—it was wrinkled with a sardonic smile.

CHAPTER XLII.—MARCO'S REVENGE.

THE racing season having fairly set in, the whirl in which the Dormer-Pagets lived had increased in force to something resembling a maelstrom. They were swallowed up in a round of excitement which even they found a little distressing, and they could endure a good deal of that sort of thing.

Almost every day found them on some fresh race-course. Miles often had to be travelled by rail or by road to reach the scene of the day's employment, yet the betting woman and her betting husband were sure to appear in the midst of their circle, brisk, noisy, and eager for the fray; eating heartily, drinking deeply, and ready to bet upon anything with anybody.

Through all the excitement and fatigue, Mrs. Dormer-Paget was resplendent. Neither excitement nor fatigue affected her beauty, dimmed the brightness of her eyes, impaired the roseate loveliness of her complexion, or planted a white hair amid the lustre of her raven tresses.

Her occupation was that for which she appeared to have been born.

On Saturdays there would sometimes be an interruption to the round of business. Saturday was frequently an off-day; hence it was a favourite one on which dinner parties were given at Dormer-Paget House.

Marco was no doubt aware of this, for it was on a Saturday that he proposed to Edmund Harcourt to introduce him to these friends.

It was late when they reached the house.

Marco's appearance appeared to surprise the servant at the door; but he did not refuse his mistress, nor did he make any objection when Marco said—

"My friend will wait here in the ante-room. Ask Mrs. Dormer-Paget to see me in the little drawing-room for a few minutes. I will not detain her. When I ring, show up my friend."

These instructions being obeyed, Marco followed the servant up-stairs into the room he had mentioned. It was deserted, but sitting there the Italian could hear the sound of distant voices and laughter. There was a singular expression on his face as he sat drumming with his fingers on the table, musing, but impatient. The rustle of silk caused him to pull himself together.

The lady of the house entered, radiant in a dress of rose satin, trailing on the ground like the robe of an empress.

"You are returned?" she asked, nervously, commencing the conversation directly she entered the room. "I am so glad. And you have something particular to say to me?"

"I have. Where is Zerina?"

He spoke sternly, and with a hard-set face.

"Your daughter? Indeed, I have not the faintest idea."

"Yet I left her in your charge?"

"As my guest, rather."

"What! There is a distinction?"

"Certainly"—she was trembling, but grew firmer as she went on. "Had I accepted the charge of Zerina, I should have been responsible to you for her."

"And, as it is, you shirk that responsibility?"

"Clearly. She came here at your request, not on my invitation—since you compel me to explain. She remained here, in spite of my suggestions that it was not the fittest place in the world for her; and at her own good pleasure she quitted the house, without a word of explanation or of thanks."

Instinctively, as she spoke, the lady glanced at the colonel's bracelet glittering on her left wrist, and crossed her hands, so that the right hand rested on the diamonds, and blotted out their glitter.

Marco fixed her with his eyes, as he rejoined—

"You had no part in her disappearance? It was not of your planning?"

"No."

"And you think this explanation should be satisfactory to me—to me, her father?"

The lady tossed her head indignantly.

"You are not a fool," she said. "You must have guessed that something of this sort would happen when you put the girl in my hands. You did suspect it, and yet persevered. You had some motive, as you have some motive now. What it is, God knows. But your calmness betrays you: it is unnatural."

"Indeed! Have you had such experience of fathers robbed of their children—stabbed in their tenderest affections—that you can venture to say what is or is not natural to them?"

"Marco!" cried the woman, stung beyond endurance by his manner, "what is this part you are playing? Why this mask? What is the motive of all you have done and are doing? It is useless for you to come here to upbraid me for anything I may have done in regard to Zerina. You have only yourself to blame for anything that has happened. Shall I tell you why?"

"Yes, tell me."

"Because I have from the first doubted that she was your child."

"Ah! And why?"

"Simply because it is unnatural that a father should be the instrument of his child's ruin—as you have been in bringing Zerina into my circle—and you know it!"

Marco smiled.

"Women have strange fancies," he said. "There is no accounting for them. Least of all, for yours. Who would have supposed that you could have deceived me for the sake of that Hilton Gathorne, after all that had passed between us; after the vows we had exchanged, and the eternal fidelity to which we had pledged ourselves? Yet it was so; you threw off the consul's secretary for the consul without a thought."

"Marco! Marco!" interrupted Mrs. Dormer-Paget. "This was ages ago. Why rake it all up? We have been good friends for many a day. For heaven's sake, let the past be buried in the past."

"With all my heart. Yet it is well that women should learn that their caprices, though forgiven, are not always forgotten. At least, my countrymen have tenacious memories—"

"And vindictive hearts."

"Quite so; but as you say, let us leave the past and come to the present. Zerina must be found. You shrug your shoulders; but I repeat, she must be found. You know where to look for her?"

"I know whose company she is sharing: our good friend, Colonel Duplex—"

"The greatest scoundrel in aristocratic London. She is in his power?"

"She is his companion on a Continental trip," said the lady, with an assumption of indifference.

Marco heard with affected horror—for it will be remembered that he had already received this information from Randolph Agnew.

"She must be rescued," he said; "and you who have helped to ruin must help to save her. Come, I have below a friend who will readily join us in this, and you must consent to receive him and to act with him. Heavens! I never dreamed that it would come to this."

He rose while speaking, went to the bell, and rang it fiercely.

Mrs. Dormer-Paget protested.

"What are you doing?" she demanded. "Am I to be the fool of your every caprice? And this stranger, who is he? what do you propose?"

"Hush! He is at the door."

"But—"

Already the door was opening. Marco stepped toward it, and admitted the stranger. Taking him by the hand he led him toward Mrs. Dormer-Paget, who stood erect, indignant at the whole proceeding.

"Allow me," he said, "to introduce to you my good friend, Mr. Edmund Harcourt—"

The lady staggered back a pace or two, on to the satin of her train.

"Hilton Gathorne!" she cried.

A TRAIN was carrying a clergyman, and five or six youths who kept scolding at religion and telling disagreeable stories. The good man endured it all, simply remarking as he got out, "We shall meet again." "Why shall we meet again?" said the leader of the band. "Because I am a prison chaplain," was the reply.

The Man in the Open Air.

THE Man in the Open Air ought to have been of the family of the Macintosh, and wear that distinguished coat as a protection against the deluges from on high, which have been so heavy and so persistent as to make him fancy it was the desire of the angry elements to wash him off the earth, or into it. But still, like Ajax, he has—reverently, however—defied the lightning, hail, and thunderclap; and where he could not ascend a mountain, and look down upon the cloud-charged host in safety, as he has often done, he was ready to take in the whole aspect of nature under such a scumble of water colour.

Had not porpoises appeared in the Thames, and other estuaries; and were we therefore surprised that "dirty weather," with much wind, was on its way to our island? Then fish of all kinds gladdened the hearts and weighted the baskets of the patient anglers; and they knew that floods were imminent, and therefore literally provided for rainy days by laying in a good store of provisions in their internal gastronomic larders. Then the dew had ceased to rise in a morning, and the very skin of the soil had cracked and gaped for moisture, and all vegetation was parched and sere. Potatoes got up, and demanded an extra price. A good cabbage was scarcely to be had for love or money; though the latter invariably prevailed, either in the market garden or Covent Garden Market; and altogether—

"The very earth was thirsty then,
And surely thirsty must be men."

When the welcome clouds burst, and refreshed and invigorated all beneath them, with the exception of the greengrocer, who, with the fall of the market, felt an equal depression of dependence, and again laid in a stock of the most marketable and profitable of all capital—civility.

Was it, then, for the Man in the Open Air to grumble in sharing the common lot, although he did get "wet through"?

Wet through! yes; this is one of the many exaggerations in which we deal in common conversation, and which to keep pace with, to obtain attention in society, we have to put our tongue upon stilts. Who would listen to you if you told them you had a nice, tender leg of mutton at dinner? No, you must emphatically assure them that it was "beautiful," that the cherry and raspberry tart was "lovely," that you never tasted such fruit before. To the simplest story, "You never heard of such a thing;" that you would not believe it if any one else had told you; and that the whole party was "awfully jolly."

Thus, men are said to run like lightning; you are left "but for a minute," and your companion is gone an hour; and Fido does everything but speak. The consequence of this straining after emphasis is that in its midst modest men are dumb; their expressions are below the standard, and they are endlessly diving in the general conversation, and never get to the superficial and conventional style of thing.

Well, well—if we have exaggerated in the above, we apologize.

But here we have a ray of sunshine, and we quit the shepherd's hovel for the open air again. All insect life

wakes up. The fowls of the air plume their sodden feathers, and the gossamer knows as well as tell-tale rainbow can assure man, that there will be no more rain to-day.

What a fund for thought and reflection is there in the habits of the whole spider tribe—especially of the gossamer, whose silvery threads are so frequently seen in fine weather extending from bush to bush, from furrow to furrow, and glancing with iridescent brightness in the morning sun, and of the origin of which the world was so long in mystery. Spencer speaks of them as “scorched dew,” and Thomson mentions in his “Autumn,” “the filmy threads of dew evaporate.”

The gossamer, however, is now known to be the threads of a minute spider. Shakspeare mentions it twice; but not in connection with the microscopic being from which the thread originates—

“A lover may bestride the gossamer,
That idles in the open air,
And yet not fall, so light is vanity.”

And he put in the mouth of Edgar when he accosts his father, after his supposed leap from that

“Cliff whose high and bending head
Looks fearfully on the confined deep—”

“Hadst thou been aught but gossamer, feather, air,
So many fathom down precipitating,
Thou hadst shivered like an egg.”

Hogg elegantly speaks of it in the “Queen’s Wake”—

“Light as the fumes of fervid wine,
Or foam belts floating on the brine,
The gossamer in air that sail,
Or down that dances on the gale.”

There are various theories as to how these threads are sent—

“Sailing ’mid the golden air.”

One of them is advocated by Mr. John Murray—

“The aeronautic spider can propel its threads both horizontally and vertically, and at all relative angles, in motionless air, and in an atmosphere agitated by winds; nay, more, the aerial traveller can even dart its thread, to use a nautical phrase, in the ‘wind’s eye.’ My opinion and observation are based upon many hundreds of experiments. The entire phenomena are electrical.”

Mr. Blackwell has equally tried numerous experiments, and he is “confident in affirming that in motionless air, spiders have not the power of darting their threads even through the space of half an inch.”

And the Man in the Open Air, after his own personal observation, and in the face of the poetic sentiments which are thus removed, affirms that Mr. Blackwell is right.

Any one who has witnessed the fretfulness and sufferings of horses in summer, under the infliction of flies—particularly that of the “gad,” which stings so unmercifully as often to drive its victim frantic, and has occasioned many fatal accidents when driving—will be glad to know that there exists a preventive, in a solution of walnut leaves. A handful of these leaves ought to be allowed to simmer in a pint of water for about three hours, the liquor should then be poured off and allowed to cool, and then applied with a sponge,

carefully avoiding all white patches on the horse, as the solution is a stain.

If properly made, flies will never come near the smell of the liquid, although it is very slightly, if at all, perceptible to us. Would that man could find something equally efficacious to keep off these pests, the persistency of which has become a proverb. Gipsies are well acquainted with this receipt, and were in the habit of anointing stolen children, when first kidnapped, with it, not only as a disguise, but as a protection, in the woods and lanes, from the visitation of flies.

While upon the horse, we may mention that the fidgety practice of some horses of pawing first arises from the teasing of insects, and thus becomes normal. To cure this, an india-rubber shoe has been placed upon some horses, as an experiment, while in the stable; and it has been found that with the ceasing of the noise thus occasioned, the horse has left off, and altogether been rendered quiet.

White swallows have been seen for some consecutive days at Castle Hill, Torrington, Devon. Mr. J. D. Bastard saw one flying about that neighbourhood for a long time. One would imagine that here, at least, seeing is believing; but the belief in the hybrid and albino tribe has received a great shock with us, from the private confessions of a naturalist or bird stuffer, who tells us he will “manufacture any number of fish or fowl of this description to order.” He candidly adds, the fabrication must not be overdone, or numbers will lower the price.

The white sparrow, for years the associate of the horses on the cab-stand in Piccadilly, it is well known, was subject to periodical pickling, and the fish can be more easily doctored than birds.

Clouds of butterflies of the *Colias edusa* species have appeared this year between Margate and Broadstairs.

A few years ago the same district was covered for miles with lady-birds, and swarmed with small snails. These visitations are very curious; and all the theories as yet propounded fail to account satisfactorily for their presence.

Pheasants at Home.

DURING a late visit to France, I was unwilling to leave Fontainebleau without visiting the pheasantry. I was already acquainted with this establishment, the principal arrangements of which are excellent, though in the minor details there was much to be desired when I saw it last. This year, however, I found many decided improvements, notably the new buildings which form a centre for operations, the most important of which is undoubtedly the feeding of the birds, which consume daily a mixture of boiled potatoes and barley, kneaded into paste in enormous troughs. Two meals—one at seven in the morning, and the other at four in the afternoon—suffice for the pheasants’ appetites, the number of the birds being nearly five thousand. At the appointed time the attendants whistle for the birds as they pass along the paths, where they throw down the food out of large sacks. Then come the hungry birds from every direction—flying, scuffling, and hustling one another; and in a few minutes the yellow sand is black and animated, like the interior of an ant’s nest. Every one tries his best

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BEFORE THE SPORT.

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to get before his neighbour, for the pheasant has a bad character for ferocity and selfishness. Once satisfied, the females on one side and males on the other indulge among themselves in fights of such extraordinary violence, that if order were not quickly restored by the keeper, the duels would frequently have fatal results, as I had the opportunity of seeing for myself. I had noticed two pheasants pecking at one another most persistently, and took care not to lose sight of them, while noticing other matters of interest. At the end of half an hour, several missing feathers on each side, and their bills stained with blood, showed increasing earnestness in the combatants, which were now fighting in the paths and thickets. The keeper, finding that I was paying very little attention to the information he was trying to give me, and seeing me still watching these two birds, told me that I might follow them for a long time without seeing the end of the combat, for these fights would often be kept up for an hour, and even then his intervention would be necessary to prevent the antagonists from killing each other.

"I think," he said, "that our golden pheasants would be more interesting."

"Let us go and see them, then," I replied.

But I could not resist looking round again after the warlike couple, who were now, however, out of sight.

Before entering the buildings where the finest specimens are reared and kept, I said to my guide—

"Do you think we shall be able to find those two again when we come out?"

"You are interested in that couple, sir," replied the man; "certainly, we can find them again, unless—but we will see."

He looked towards the spot where I had last seen the combatants, and I was astonished to see him jump quickly over a hedge.

"Let us run, sir," he said—"perhaps it is too late."

I followed him eagerly, hoping to find an explanation of his unfinished remark.

We soon discovered one of the duellists, just expiring, while six of his companions were picking at him viciously—each apparently trying to excel the others in cruelty.

The keeper then told me that he had been drawn to the spot by seeing the other pheasants collecting, as in these cases, unless he interfered, the fight might probably become general, the duel turning into what our Irish friends term a "shaloo," only with far more serious consequences, as in such a case the ranks would be terribly thinned.

This little incident is enough to illustrate the natural ferocity of the pheasant. There is not the least hope of their being tamed while kept together in large numbers in pheasantries.

They are not an intelligent race of birds. Their brilliant plumage, and the very little care they take in providing shelter, renders them an easy prey to their enemies; and foxes, polecats, and badgers should be carefully kept down, in addition to the necessary precaution being taken of surrounding with an enclosure the retired spots where the birds are fond of hiding themselves during the day. But even then there are their winged enemies, against whom the fences are no protection, rather serving to imprison for them an easily found prey. So many of these birds of prey

hover about, that it is necessary to make active war upon them. The pheasantry at Fontainebleau possesses a Grand Duke owl, which is used for this purpose. Placed on the top of a pole, his size does not prevent him from attracting numerous enemies, who, thinking him out of place, come to mob him; but the shot of the watcher delivers the owl from these too confident assailants. This goes on from day to day, and the trap is always successful. When I went by the owl's cage, I was at no loss to comprehend why it was placed out of reach, not being able to mistake for a smile the expression of ferocity in his yellow-rimmed eyes, and the angry working of his beak, accompanying his preparations for defence, which were preceded by the general ruffling of his plumage, behind which one could imagine the strong claw, armed with hook nails. The feathers of his ears were extended in the form of a crest, or like black horns growing from the top of the whitish circles which surrounded his eyes, and contributed to the ferocious aspect of this nocturnal bird.

A large proportion of the pheasants are not confined, but live in the thick groves, which extend over a wide space, allowing of the separation of the full-grown birds from the young, who have everything to fear from their elders. Their number can be best judged of when they are called to partake of their liberal meals in the alleys. It is an unpleasant sight, though, for a sportsman—five thousand birds filling their crops at stated times, like hens being fattened. These handsome creatures grow less interesting also from their extreme greediness, when one sees them crowded together to such an extent that one might crush them in approaching their keeper.

The silver pheasants are kept in confinement. They are very rare, and more wild than the others. As for the golden pheasant, it is not suitable for sporting purposes, as it is more clever, and defends itself better by its irregular flight. I think it has more instinct than its less brilliant relations, and that is not saying much in its favour; for the ordinary pheasant, when hand-fed, always acts as if he had nothing to fear from men or dogs. It often lies hidden against a trunk, or in a furrow, without remembering that it has left traces behind it which will lead to its hiding-place; it often perches on bare branches, and while it attracts notice from its size, it appears to court danger by saluting the dawn with its discordant crow, even as it bade adieu to the twilight of the evening before. We must not complain, though, since we profit by this want of caution, which is, however, less noticeable in the hen bird, on whom nature has bestowed a more sober covering, that she may watch over her brood without betraying her presence, her plumage varying from brown to grey.

I shall not enter into the details of the pheasantry at Fontainebleau, which is constructed according to the ordinary system for establishments of this kind, which have been so many times described. In an open situation, but near woods and rocks; it is some distance from all habitations, and from the noise which would trouble the hens and injure the young; while the soil is composed of fine sand, so much more advantageous than clay.

Here the beautiful bird of Phasis attains to a large size; and since I have mentioned this word Phasis, I wish to make a remark on the subject. Pheasant, as

everybody knows, comes from the Greek *phasianos*, taken from the name of the river of Colchis which flows in Mingrelia. I affirm that if Jason could compare our game with that which he is said to have imported into Europe, he would own at once that the pheasant is wonderfully improved, which I proved for myself when, coming from Georgia, I travelled down the Phasis.

Its banks sometimes seemed to traverse uncultivated plains, sometimes encroached on a virgin forest, the trees and bushes of which fringed its sides, so that the melting of the snow in winter, or even abundant rains suddenly swelling the river, would tear out these giants, and plunge them with their parasitic vegetation into those famous waters which formerly rolled over golden sands.

I will not pretend to judge of the quantity of game contained in these classical forests; those who care to see for themselves have only to disembark at Poti. We are told that Aristotle had seen these birds almost domesticated, and consequently much larger even than those of the country to which their origin is assigned.

Wanderings in Half-a-Guinea.

BY MAJOR MONK-LAUSEN.

CHAPTER XIV.—FIRST MEETING WITH THE NATIVES OF THE INTERIOR.

DURING our noontide halt, one day, I withdrew somewhat from the rest, and, stretching myself under a tree, I took my pocket-book out of the waterproof compartment in which I kept it, and indulged the reverie which its contents suggested.

The almanack was not for that year, but the previous; yet still, so long as I was pretty regular in my corrections, I could tell the days of the week and month by it. Thus I always managed, if possible, to brew some palm wine, or, bringing the still into operation, to extract a little alcohol from a certain substance I had discovered, and cannot describe here, as it would probably be a loss of millions to me were I to disclose the secret; all I say is, when I have got my manufactories built, and my agents at work, let the Scotch and Irish distillers tremble!

I say, I endeavoured to provide some little extra creature comfort every Sunday. There was no church to go to, or I would have sent my retainers to it; but, in default of a place of worship, I let them get a trifle boozy, and so taught them to value one day more than others, at all events; thus attracting them towards religion in a gentle and not too obtrusive manner at first.

After I had determined the date, and made one or two notes in the diary of the latitude of our present position, the geological formation of the country, the most curious facts I had noticed in natural history, and the game I had bagged, I took the treasures out of the pockets, and brooded awhile over the civilized past which they recalled. A lock of hair—orange-crimson, resplendent; a letter in a feminine hand, commencing "Perjured villain!" and full of loving jealousy; an I O U of Sir Jacob Plunger, the Welsh baronet; a five pound note of some country bank, received in the ring at Ascot, which I had never been able to exchange.

Suddenly a hairy limb came down before my drowsy

eyes, and the pocket-book, with all its belongings, was snatched from my grasp.

I did not start up—one learns to move with caution in lands of the scorpion, the centipedes, and a hundred other reptiles and insects, to touch whom inadvertently is death—but I rose as quickly as prudence allowed, and saw an ape on the bough above me, taking my literary treasures with his hand from the foot which had been let down to seize them. A parrot darted down, and seized the lock of hair, which doubtless went to line her nest. As for the monkey, before I could get a shot at him, he was safely hidden amongst the topmost boughs, and all I knew of his whereabouts was from the occasional drifting down of a few very minute particles of paper.

This loss annoys me more now than it did at the time, when, I think, I was rather amused than otherwise; for I should like to be able to fix the exact date of many matters, and particularly that of my first introduction to the Kreps. The event itself made a great impression upon me.

Several of our party being footsore, either a prolonged halt or a change in the method of locomotion became desirable, and the neighbourhood of a fine, broad, navigable river, the current of which was not too strong, suggested the latter.

Two handsome canoes, large enough to hold us comfortably, stores and all, were built, and we paddled away up stream; not rapidly, indeed, but pleasantly—always landing at midday for shelter from the sun's rays, and at night to cook our supper and sleep. Also, when I sighted game from the canoe, and we wanted meat, I went ashore in pursuit of it.

Thus our progress met with many breaks and delays. But what mattered it? I was not travelling with any ulterior object, I was simply leading the life which best suited my fancy at the time.

One day, about two hours after sunrise, on turning an abrupt corner, we came upon a village. There were rows of huts, with men, women, and children moving about amongst them. There was a patch of cleared land, with maize growing upon it, in one part, and women hoeing in another. There were natives disporting themselves in the water—in a word, all the life of a populous place.

I was utterly dumbfounded, and rubbed my eyes, fancying that it was a dream. This was very absurd, since I knew that the island was pretty thickly inhabited in parts. But I had wandered about so long without seeing any human beings but my own people, that I had come to feel as if the whole place belonged to me; and I positively resented the presence of these people, as if they were trespassers on my private domain.

This unamiable sentiment appeared to be mutual; for our appearance excited great commotion. The people ran to their huts, and dived into them; and as the entrances were small holes, on a level with the ground, this general rush to earth gave them the appearance of rabbits disturbed in a warren. But their subsequent proceedings were not rabbit-like. The women and children, indeed, remained in their burrows; but the men presently reappeared with the weapons which they had only gone home to fetch, and gathered in a numerous cluster on the bank, armed—the majority with spears, a select few with firearms.

The latter treated us to a straggling volley, perhaps to bring us to; but, if so, they should not have endeavoured to hit us, which they evidently did, though they happily failed.

I had already ordered my lads to make for the bank, where we presently landed; and, under cover of the brushwood which fringed the riverside at the spot I had hastily perceived and indicated, we got our goods on shore, and I disposed of the men favourably for the reception of an attack.

The natives of Half-a-Guinea are superior to most other uncivilized people in this—that when they mean fighting they make less palaver about it. These peasant villagers mistrusted our intentions, saw that we were so few in number as to promise an easy victory, and, after very little time for arrangement and disposal of their forces, advanced resolutely to the attack.

But my men were all armed with good firelocks of some sort, which went off invariably when the triggers were pulled; they were also trained to act in concert and on a system, in obedience to my directions; and mere numerical odds count for little against purpose and order, unless it is possible for the crowd to surround the disciplined few, and overwhelm them with a storm of missiles, and we could protect ourselves against that in the present conjuncture.

I therefore waited for the onset with confidence; but judge my rage and despair when the six Alfoers dropped their weapons, and advanced towards the enemy, who were now within twenty yards, with shouts and gesticulations, leaving Atah and Tulu, Peter Tromp and me, to defend ourselves as we could.

"Don't shoot, milor, but listen," said Piti in my ear.

And I restrained my first impulse, and waited to see what passed between my fellows and the hostile natives.

"Do you not remember us?" cried the former, calling to several of the others by name. "We are Booboo, Tata, Ponda, Squeely, Work, Coger—who were taken in the great battle with the Kralls. Piti is with us, too. Where is the chief, her father?"

"The chief is dead," replied the new-comers, who did not decline to acknowledge their relatives, though the reception they gave them was somewhat cold, considering the length of time which had elapsed since they last saw them.

But the reason for this became apparent enough when one of the strangers asked the pregnant question—

"Why are you in the company of a Dutchman?"

"He is *not* a Dutchman!" shouted Booboo, indignantly, ignoring, and probably not remembering, poor Peter Tromp, whose nationality, indeed, may have been unknown to him. "He is an Englishman, and the Dutch are his enemies."

"But he is white."

"Ah, you have not travelled—we have. There are many white peoples, and many black peoples. The English are as good as the Dutch are bad; and this man is the best of the English. Wow, but he is great! Wow, but he is wise! Wow, but he is powerful! He has medicines which can cure anything; he destroys crocodiles by the hundred; those who follow him never want meat, for he says to the deer and to the buffalo, 'die,' and they die; he walked to the top of Asor, and

came down on the back of a bird; he brews the best stuff you ever tasted in your life."

My reputation was evidently in such good hands, that I remained quiescent till the eloquence of my henchman appeared to flag, and then I stepped calmly and majestically forward, holding Piti by the hand.

"Noble Kreps!" I said, in very intelligible Poo-pooan. "I come to you as a friend, to restore to your chief his long-lost daughter. The old man is dead; I am sorry; we must all die." This original sentiment appeared to strike their untutored minds with great force; so I repeated it. "We must all die, but that is no reason why we should be in a hurry to cut one another's throats. Not that I object to a fight now and then, when things get dull; so if you reject my friendship, just say so. I could have destroyed the lot of you half an hour ago if I had wished."

Wonderful are the effects of eloquence, even upon the uncultivated intellect of the barbarian; my words sufficed to turn the vacillating opinion of the natives in my favour, and they showed unmistakable signs of friendship. First, they fired their guns—such, at least, as would go off—in the air; then, ranging themselves in front of me, they bent over backwards, slowly and simultaneously, until their hands touched the ground; then, still keeping excellent time, they raised their feet and stood on their heads; clapped their soles together three times, and returned gradually to the normal position of the human race. At the moment of attaining it, however, they turned to the right, thus bringing the line into single file; and as this manœuvre was executed, each man extended his left leg behind him, and the one in his rear seized it by the ankle with his left hand. The chain thus formed commenced hopping towards the village we had seen, I following behind, and wondering how long they would be able to keep up so inconvenient a method of progression.

When we neared the huts, the remainder of the population emerged from them, and commenced a dance of welcome, of which I will only say that I much doubt whether the Lord Chamberlain would approve of its production upon the English stage.

With regard to the costume, there was in many cases literally nothing to object to.

However, the intention was to welcome our party, and assure us of their goodwill and hospitality; and, under such circumstances, the severest moralist would hardly care to stickle for a petticoat the more or a caper the less.

The oldest man in the village, who was treated by the other natives with a marked deference, now came forward, and made me a speech; at the close of which he said that a hut should be assigned as my residence. But I told him, in reply, that I and my followers were independent of residences formed of mud and wood, as we were provided with tents made of the tent-cone tree.

When this was proved to be the case, the attitude of all around me changed from friendliness to a sort of awe. All the traditions of their race tended to the belief that it was only a king of men, destined to lead and rule others, who could obtain the tent-cone. And when my followers told them how I had got it, striking it from the summit of the trunk with a single shot (though in reality it was a simultaneous double one), their astonishment and respect rather increased.

But, in spite of all this, I was a prey to considerable anxiety that night. Was it likely that my six Alfoers would be willing to leave their friends and relatives, now that they had found them? If not, there would be Peter Tromp, Atah, and Tulu to help me to carry all the stores which were necessary for travelling through a wild and unknown country. I fell asleep at last, while meditating upon these things; and was roused in the morning to attend to a more pressing difficulty.

CHAPTER XV.—MATRIMONIAL DISPUTES—JUDICIAL ARROW COMBAT.

TATA and Squeely had found their wives, and wanted them; but they had married again, and their present husbands declined to give them up. On the other hand, Coger's wife had found *him*; she had also married again, and her second lord was not only willing but anxious to renounce his claim, but Coger was not willing to take her.

Thus the question became intricate; for to decide in favour of Tata and Squeely, was to go against Coger; and *vice versa*. It was necessary, however, for me to give an opinion, for the whole tribe was sitting in conclave upon the matter, and I was called in, and appealed to with a deference which gave me a strong feeling of responsibility. For when I rose to my feet, the hubbub which had been going on ceased.

The assembly was seated in a wide circle, some six or eight deep; the men in front, the women in the rear—all squatting on their heels. This arrangement was not due to any feeling against female suffrage, but was a mere measure of precaution taken for the protection of an unpopular speaker. For experience had shown that the men could generally be trusted to preserve the freedom of debate, even when they disapproved of the opinions uttered; or, at any rate, contrived to silence the obnoxious orator without physical force. But the softer sex, if they could get at him, treated him as the roughs on a racecourse in England treat a welsher.

"The question seems to be," I began, "whether it is the greater hardship to be separated from a woman who suits you, or to be forced to live with one who does not suit you. Now, this is a very nice point to settle, because the disappointment or calamity of the moment always seems to us the worst possible. When the flies are troublesome, and we itch, we think it better to smart; when we smart, we despise tickling. Now, in my country, England, when we cannot come to any clear conclusion we decide the matter by *tossing*. We take a coin, like this which I now produce; you observe that it is differently marked on the two sides: this we call heads, the other tails. The coin is then spun into the air by a dexterous flip of the thumb, thus—by one of the contending parties; and while it is spinning the other cries 'heads' or 'tails,' and wins or loses according to the correctness, or otherwise, of his call. I move that the various claimants toss."

The principle of my proposition gave universal satisfaction; but an alteration had to be made in the details, in order to adapt the idea to the customs of the country. The first method of deciding a disputed point judicially is by a bow and arrow duel—first blood to win; which sounded to me like a serious business, until I was informed that the quickness of eye and

suppleness of body amongst the Alfoers are such as to render the encounter a mere farce, played out in deference to the wisdom of those forefathers who had instituted it, and in whose days it was doubtless a real thing enough, as it must have taken the inherited skill of many generations, in addition to much patient practice, to bring the dart-dodging faculty to its present pitch of perfection.

In spite of all I had heard, I was not perfectly reassured as to Tata's safety, when I saw him step out, bow in hand, and five arrows in the belt which formed his sole article of costume, and join his antagonist, second husband of the coveted Krumby, who was similarly armed.

A space of forty paces was measured by one who acted throughout as master of the ceremonies, and a stake driven into the ground at each end. On the top of each stake a small frog was secured.

The archers, advancing together to a spot midway between the stakes, with arrows fitted, bowed right and left to the assembled company, and then, turning back to back, discharged their arrows simultaneously, each transfixing his frog.

Having thus proved the accuracy of their aim, they bowed to right, to left, to each other, and walked to their respective stakes.

They then commenced their shooting match, taking each other for targets, and displaying a quickness of body, limb, and eye which I have never seen surpassed by a professional conjuror.

Of their desire to hit one another there could be no doubt; to their skill the unfortunate frogs could testify; but of danger to either of them there was not a shade. By an almost imperceptible turn of head or limb, or inflection of the body, they avoided the missiles without the slightest difficulty; and when the five arrows on each side were expended, another pair of rival husbands came forward, and went through a similar ceremony with equal impunity.

This almost miraculous power of evading missiles had at one time well-nigh put an end to all fighting amongst the Alfoers; when nobody could hit anybody, it seemed a waste of time and arrows to go to war.

Of course, hand-to-hand fighting was always open to them; but, somehow, that description of combat has never been popular with infantry uncased in defensive armour. When clothed in steel or thick hides, and guarded besides with a big shield, warriors have not been averse to a hammering match, in which experience told them they had a good chance of coming off without any more bruises than the next blacksmith could repair; and a mounted soldier has no objection to a rush and a dash at his foe—his blood is warmed by the gallop, the whole affair is over presently, in five minutes he will either be victorious, or flying, or cut down. But even in an Irish scrimmage there is a great deal more stone-throwing and flourishing of shilleghs than actual use of the blackthorn; a town and gown row consists principally of shouting, varied by the pommelling of isolated individuals who have the bad luck to fall in unexpectedly with the hostile faction; and those men who have seen most service tell us that bayonets are hardly ever crossed.

So it happened that the Kreds and the Kralls were becoming quite peaceable, when certain Europeans visited the coasts of Half-a-Guinea, and introduced

firearms; and the prospect of being able to kill their enemies from a distance rekindled the warlike spirit of the Alfoers.

But the muskets they possessed being few in number, and ammunition difficult to obtain, archery was still principally trusted to for the purposes of the chase; and the universal excellence in it which at first surprised me was, I found, due to the ancient practice of the Spartans obtaining amongst them. Before he could walk alone, and while still suspended, like a knapsack, at his mother's back, the infant boy had a tiny bow and arrow placed in his hands; and, as soon as he was weaned, he was obliged to hit the basket containing his breakfast before he was allowed to have it. When able to run about freely, it was part of his daily exercises to be shot at by others with blunt arrows—which stung prodigiously, however, when they struck the unprotected flesh. I doubt, however, whether even these early and perpetual practisings would have produced the extraordinary skill which I witnessed, if it had not been for the instinctive aptitude transmitted from generation to generation.

One thing gave me considerable apprehension. Suppose some one claimed Piti! Atah, her husband, being a Poopooan of the coast, was a stranger to all this arrow-dodging; and if obliged to accept this ordeal—so harmless in the case of those to the manner born—would infallibly be transfixed.

Atah had proved himself most excellent, intelligent, and faithful; the services of his wife had been invaluable. I had not only consented to their marriage, but had given away the bride; and I felt in honour bound to protect the pair, and prevent their separation. Therefore, any dispute upon the subject would be particularly awkward.

But I need not have troubled myself; for they were left in peace, and the question did not arise—at least, at that time. And if a disappointed reader complains that I have excited his hopes of a pathetic separation for nothing, I can only observe that more than half the anxiety of life is futile, since anticipated evils less rarely befall us than those which are unexpected.

However, the form of the archery duel had been duly gone through, and the question of wife property was still undecided. It now, therefore, remained to employ the second and real method of arbitration—the method which was to be equivalent to the tossing which I had proposed.

For when the Alfoers desire to leave any matter to be decided by chance, they do not toss.

They do not draw lots.

Neither do they throw dice.

They have a scorpion fight.

Three scorpion fights were at once arranged for the settlement of the matrimonial claims of Tata and Squeely, and for the matrimonial disclaim of Coger.

A CORRESPONDENT entered an office, and accused the compositor of not having punctuated his communication, when the typo earnestly replied—"I'm not a pointer; I'm a setter."

THE late lamented Lemprière tells us that Io was changed into a heifer; but we have lately gleaned from a doctor's prescription the following piece of information respecting the end of that young person—"Io-dide of potassium."

The Egotist's Note-book.

ARE we to have an autumn session of Parliament? It is talked of at every public meeting anent the Bulgarian atrocities, and loudly sympathetic cries are raised in its behalf. For my part, I think not; for Lord Beaconsfield is far too astute a politician to accede to such a demand. No; when the question is really forcibly brought forward, he will reply with—"Gentlemen, there is no need for such a call on the representatives of the people. Her Majesty's Government have already taken such steps as were necessary," and *voila tout!*

So peace is promised in the East, for the great Powers have accepted the proposals of the English Government; and of course, willy nilly, "Bono Johnny," the Turk, must accept these terms. I say *must*—there is no *must* in the case; for the Moslem may be so blinded by hate and rage that he may refuse, and so rush blindly on his fate. *Quem Deus vult perdere*, as the old saying goes—they first drive mad. The best thing that could happen for Europe ought to be that the Turk was made mad, and then driven across the Bosphorus; for no matter what peace the Powers may patch up, they cannot wipe away the blood-stains left by long years of Turkish misrule. Statesmen may debate, make minutes, issue notes; but the Bulgarian horrors are now historical, and will cry out for ages against the political tangles and squabbles for power that must be kept up while humanity is crushed into the dust. Well, the result will be, I suppose, peace; a talk of indemnity to the Bulgarians, a trifle of land to Montenegro, and Prince Milan allowed to reign in quiet. If matters turn out better, well and good; but it is wise to expect little, and to be thankful for small mercies.

They are getting on with our 81-ton gun—that interesting object that has cost England a long way on towards one hundred thousand pounds, indirectly as well as directly. I do not mean to say that the gun itself cost one hundred thousand; but there have been some heavy expenses incurred on its behalf. For instance, a steam hammer large enough to forge it had to be made; the crane to lift it cost fifteen thousand pounds; the barge to carry it, three thousand; some thousands have been spent in firing it off, for it costs thirty pounds a shot. Then there have been the targets; there is the cost of the grandly mechanical carriage to bear the monster, with its mechanical loading apparatus and chain ramrod with a rigid back, which crawls in at the muzzle like an iron serpent. And now it is made, what is to be done with it? for surely it can never arm a ship without knocking it to pieces when fired. Here is a sample of its prowess. One day when fired, a gentleman, for experiment, placed a box truck laterally thirty feet from the gun, and about nine feet back from a straight line drawn across the muzzle. When the gun was fired, the atmospheric concussion was so great that the box truck, strongly made as it was, collapsed. How are the sailors on board the ships to stand the concussion, then, of such a piece? And, after all, great as it is, the Italians have made one bigger—to wit, one hundred tons; and it is said that it will be far more accurate in its action,

and far greater in its force, in consequence of a copper contrivance to save the windage.

So Mr. Slade, the medium, and Mr. Simmons, his agent, are to be prosecuted for combining to defraud—otherwise for obtaining money under false pretences. I don't, I confess, see why this should be. The people went to these men to be fooled. The medium gives his *stance* a high-sounding term, plays hocus-pocus and hanky-panky, and says the spirits did it. People like to play at seeing old Bogey, just as they used to when they were children, only they call it now by another name; so why not let them have their spiritual sensation, even as they would a galvanic shock? Your medium is only a conjuror, with his goods labelled "mystery;" but he need not be punished for this, any more than should Hermann, Frikell, or Dr. Lynn, who professed to show how the trick was done, and never did. It is a pity that the time of the magistrates should be taken up with such bosh.

An officer has been writing to a daily paper to the effect that one of his men, a private soldier, who was in the Central Station, at Leeds, on his way by train to rejoin his regiment, on escort duty, picked up a pocket-book, which, on opening, he found to contain a cheque for £150, and other valuable securities amounting to about £400 or £500. He immediately communicated his discovery to the station-master, who returned it to the owner. This gentleman rewarded the soldier with the liberal gift of one shilling! Such extreme munificence deserves to be recorded, as adding another proof to the truth of the old proverb that "Honesty is the best policy." Of course it is, but that is not the way to make men honest. One gives a shilling to the waiter at a coffee-room who has been civil and obliging, a shilling to the pleasant-faced guard who secures us a comfortable seat in the express, a shilling to the commissioner who takes a letter to the next street; but a shilling to the man who has saved us the loss of four or five hundred pounds is—I wonder whether the son of Mars called the donor mean?

Every one who wishes to see the quaint sides of life should read his police-court reports. Here is one of a crossing-sweeper, brought up for stabbing a woman with a table knife, who, when taken into custody, heaved a heavy sigh, and said he could not help what had occurred. The prisoner, in reply to the charge, said on the Sunday the complainant put the dinner on the table. He said, "Where's the gravy?" She "made no more to do than to chuck all the dinner, pudding, meat, and potatoes, under the grate." He then "chucked" the knife at her. He should not have thrown it, only she tried to run out. What a sweet picture of domestic bliss this presents! Of course, it was not right for the lady to "chuck" the dinner, done or underdone, gravied or gravyless, under the grate; but this is not a punishable offence by law. To throw knives, however, and cut people is; so the magistrate has sent our friend for trial, and his crossing will remain unswept, unless one of the many people who say in a pet that they would rather sweep a crossing than do this or that, take it up.

I hope the gentleman who has been discharged from

the Wandsworth police-court is now better, and will go to bed like a Christian. A short time since he was found lying in the mud of one of the Clapham Common ponds—mud which he had drawn over him; and for excuse he said he believed he had gone to bed. This is far worse than going home, winding up your watch with the patent corkscrew, putting your clothes to bed, and hanging yourself over the back of a chair. By the way, our friend must have fancied he had got into damp sheets.

One of the portions of last year's Annual, issued in connection with this magazine, was a good deal sneered at by the clever ones of this world, the Jeremiah Flintwinches of society. It was that where a runaway engine is chased and brought back before it reaches the coming mail. The incident was considered improbable, if not impossible. Here, however, is a similar case, which has just occurred, impossible or no, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway. The driver of a pilot-engine on this line, finding himself unable to avoid collision with a goods train coming from the East Lancashire district, reversed his engine, and sprang off, when, to his horror, the collision having taken place without much damage, the now driverless engine backed up the line, pushing the tender and a horse-box before it, and, on reaching a descending gradient, proceeded on its way at a high speed. As soon as the driver of the goods train perceived the flight of the pilot-engine, he had his own locomotive unhooked, he and his stoker started in pursuit, and, after a run of upwards of a mile and a half, the fugitive was caught, and brought to a standstill.

Sad news has come, as usual, from the various watering places. Visitors go down, hire bathing machines, intend a pleasant dip, and the water is too rough, the tide runs fast, the beach shelves too rapidly into deep water—there is always something, and the visitor is drowned. East, west, north, south, it is ever the same, year after year, and no steps are taken to prevent it. Why, at every place where bathers congregate, boats should be in readiness—not in the so-called readiness of hauled up, high and dry, on the sands, but in the sea, with a couple of clever hands on board, ready with appliances, such as life-buoys and ropes, and, if needs be, prompt to jump in, and save the drowning man, woman, or child. As it is, the arrangements are wretched; and over and over again, some unfortunate bather is drowned, whilst those who should be there to save are fumbling to get out the boats.

THE season has arrived when every one is thinking of turning from the sultriness of town life to the pleasures of a country tour. Ladies who take very little exercise when at home, with true British courage often undertake long and tedious journeys. It is of the highest importance, under such circumstances, that the clothing should in no way impede the proper circulation of the blood, but especially should the old but bad practice of gartering the leg be avoided. Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London, has provided the only means of remedying this in his New Patent Stocking Suspender, which he will send by post for 2d. extra. The prices are—Children's, 1s. 6d.; maids', 2s.; ladies', 3s. Our advice is to write at once for a pair.

A Taste of the Bush.

BRITISH Honduras is a territory not very well known at home; in fact, it might in truth be called a "geographical expression." A trip to one of the most out-of-the-way places of this out-of-the-way country is what I am going to try to describe. Belize, the capital of this flourishing colony, has its foundations, such as they are, on mahogany chips—don't be incredulous, for such is the fact. The situation of the town is nothing more nor less than a mangrove swamp; and the more solid houses and stores have for their foundation the *débris* of the timber which is the staple trade of the place, and, in fact, its *raison d'être*.

To the north, the swamp extends for miles along the coast, and it is as desolate and uninteresting a region as could well be found.

Imagine a vast forest of trees, perched up on stilts, high above coffee-coloured water and black, oozing mud, the foliage so thick that at midday the light is of the most sombre. Not a living thing to be seen, save now and then an alligator or water snake; and not a sound to break the stillness, except the buzzing of countless mosquitoes.

No description, however, can give an adequate idea of the utter dreariness and melancholy of such a place. The southern part of the colony is quite different. Some twenty miles below Belize, the mountains come down close to the coast, and it was in this direction our route lay.

Sailing along the summer seas of this coast, protected from the Atlantic rollers by the coral reef which stretches some 150 or 200 miles north and south, on a clear day you can see, in the dim distance, three jagged peaks rising high over the forest-clad hills. These are the summits of the Cockscomb Mountains. Virgin they were till lately; and peopled, by the native and Creole races, with demons, evil spirits, and such like creations of their fertile imaginations.

I confess that a great hankering to explore this *terra incognita* possessed me directly I saw it; and finding two other congenial spirits, we made up our minds to make the attempt. Two of us were doing a three years' penance in this salubrious climate—which, by the bye, is after all much maligned—and certainly earning our pay by "the sweat of our brows," if that has anything to do with it. These two shall be henceforth known as T. and W. The third, to be known as V., was the owner of a sugar estate near the mouth of the river Sittee, which we had determined to use, as far as it was available, as the easiest means of approaching our goal. V., though not an old inhabitant of the country, is a mighty bushman; and to him, therefore, were entrusted all the preparations for the expedition.

From V.'s hospitable abode we started one April morning before the sun was up. We took three "hands" with us, half Spanish, half Indian: Juancito, Anglicé Johnny, Felipe, and Trénéo; all good men and true, as they proved themselves to be. We went in the lightest of marching order, carrying only a blanket and change of clothes each; which, with our guns, cartridges, matchets, or long knives, and a plentiful supply of tobacco, completed our equipment. For provisions, we took a bag of biscuit, flour, coffee, and sugar, relying on our guns for meat. T. and W., with Felipe and Trénéo, embarked in a pitpan with the

heavy stores; whilst V. and Juancito took a light dorey. Both pitpan and dorey are "dug-outs," only the former is long and narrow, and quite flat-bottomed, whilst the latter is shaped like an ordinary boat.

I may tell you at once, to save disappointment, that we met with no startling adventures on our trip, had no hairbreadth escapes from savage natives—perhaps the fiercest things we met were mosquitoes—and altogether it was a most commonplace business. But, for all that, I look back on the days spent on the little river, and in that lovely mountain region, as some of the pleasantest of my life. The scenery alone would amply repay any one the toil and trouble of visiting what may truly be called one of Nature's "garden spots." The wealth of vegetation; the gorgeous flowering creepers, festooning the giant trees to the very summits, and making them into towers of brilliant colour; the great tree ferns, bending over the clear, still pools, with their lace-like leaves reflected in the cool depths, made up such a fairy scene as bewildered the eye with its loveliness. The stream—at our starting-point broad, shallow, and swift-flowing, with every now and then a run or fall, when the clear, bright water dashed over its rocky bed with such terrible haste that it was no joke hauling our laden craft over it—soon began to narrow and deepen. The water grew black and still, the banks closed in, and rose overhead in rocky precipices, tree-clad and draped in green. We were in Hell-gate, or *Los Tufiemos*, as the Indians call it—a sombre enough place, and supposed by these simple folk to be the very antechamber of his Satanic Majesty. At any rate, they insisted that we must pay our respects to him in a low, dark cave at the entrance of his rocky abode; otherwise, they assured us, we should never be permitted to reach Caxbon.

When we passed this gloomy region and came out into the glaring day again, we called a halt; and after refreshing the inner man, two of the party went into the bush to get our dinner, and soon came back with three quails. What the proper name of the bird may be, I cannot say, but it is one which, from a culinary point of view, it is most desirable to know. About the size of a hen turkey, and not unlike it in plumage, it has the same white, tender flesh; but with a decidedly game flavour. These quails, wild turkeys, and another bird called the curassow, furnished our larder plentifully during the expedition.

There was no sport in shooting them, for the river-side seemed alive with them, especially in the early mornings, just at sunrise; and you walked a few yards from the bank, and found your dinner perched on a tree, evidently wondering what strange animal you could be, and never moving till he dropped to a charge of No. 4. The curassow is a magnificent bird; the male is as large as a good turkey-cock, jet black on the back and wings, and white underneath; on his head he has a crest of downy, brilliant black plumes, which he lowers or erects at will; whilst at the base of the beak, and extending half up his head, is a comb of the brightest yellow—a handsome fellow enough, but not so good to eat as the plainer quail.

The first day we made about twenty-five miles, and camped on a sandy beach, hard by a fall. The first thing was to make our camp. Two strong forked poles, with another placed across them, and covered with the long cohoom palm leaves, made an excellent shelter;

at least, good enough for the fine weather we expected. But, as it turned out, "blessed is he that expecteth nothing." Supper despatched, and washed down with a cup of good coffee, the last pipe smoked, and we were soon rolled in our blankets, and fast asleep. But not for long. Soon we awoke, to find the rain pattering on our roof. Harder and harder it came. First it trickled through in drops, then it ran in streams, and all hope of a comfortable snooze was over. When morning broke, it revealed three miserable objects, crouched up under their blankets, dripping wet, and in the worst of tempers.

I confess it was very uncomfortable; but it was new to me, and there was something strange and weird in sitting hour after hour in the black darkness of the night, the silence only broken at intervals by unknown bush cries, or the heavy splash of an alligator, disporting himself in the pool hard by.

Glad enough we all were when the sun rose, and there was a prospect of drying our clothes. Soon we were under weigh again; and, after another long day's paddling and hauling, the river growing shallower and the rapids more frequent and difficult, we camped, at just before sunset, at a place where the river branched. This time we built our house more substantially, under the shade of a glorious wild fig tree; the only inconvenience of the situation being that the fruit, nearly as big as your fist, had an unpleasant habit of dropping—once with startling effect upon T.'s head. Whilst the hands—or rather, two of them—were cooking, we got our fishing lines out, and soon had a fine basket of mechacos. These and jugamels, or mountain mullet, abound in these upper waters. The latter, however, decline to take a bait, or, at least, such as we had to offer; though I fancy, from the way they rise, they might be tempted by a fly. If so, they would give first-rate sport; for they are fine, lively fellows, running to 4 lbs. or 5 lbs. weight. The only way we could get them was by spearing; and Juancito proved himself a master of the art. Armed with a long, light staff, with a four-barbed harpoon at the end, he stationed himself at a weir, and, as the fish went by at a tremendous rate, spotted the biggest, and seldom missed his shot. It looked delightfully easy, but experience proved the contrary.

The next day, we took the left branch of the stream, leaving all our heavy stores at the camp. We loaded our dorey with our kits, a bag of biscuit, and the coffee and sugar, and trudged on foot ourselves; for the water was too shallow to allow the passage of the pitpan. We then went on ahead, the hands hauling the dorey. The walking was by no means easy; for the bush was so thick and thorny that, where possible, we kept to the bed of the river, and the stones were wofully hard and slippery. The scenery, if possible, was more lovely than before; and the arching trees kept out the burning rays of the sun—a cool, delicious paradise, but inhabited by demons in the shape of bottle flies. They were in countless myriads, and settled on every unprotected spot on our bodies, with a persistence worthy of a better cause. Their sting is sharp and irritating, like the prick of a red-hot needle; and when they bite they leave, next day, a black speck as big as a pin's head.

We heard plenty of qualm and curassow, and saw abundant tracks of game—tapir, or mountain cow; warry, or river hogs; and jagua, or the tiger of Central

America. However, our object just then was to push on to the mountains; so we turned neither to the right nor to the left, tempting as the signs were. Our plan was to push on to the Cockscorn, and on the return journey to take it easy, and have our fill of shooting. This, unfortunately, we were prevented from doing by the illness of one of the party. As soon as we reached our camping-ground, an exploring party started to get to the top of one of the neighbouring hills, and from thence, if possible, get a sight of the peak, which, shut in by mountains and bush, as we had been, we had not seen since our start. In an hour or two they returned, having cut their way to the top of the hill, and seen the object of our ambition, far away to our left front. That was good news, at any rate; for at least we were in the right direction. That night we had an extra cup of coffee and an extra pipe; for on the morrow we were to part with these luxuries—at least the former. Now we had to leave the dorey, and take to the bush, carrying our traps, each man on his own back.

The next day, at sunrise, we started, loaded with a blanket, a change of clothes, a bag of biscuit, a gun, and a bag of cartridges each. W. alone carried a large flask, the others refusing to load themselves with any more encumbrances, and relying, if the worst came to the worst, on finding enough water to quench their thirst in the bajacos, or gigantic creepers, which festoon the forest trees, and hang from the topmost branches in great coils as thick as a man's arm. Badly enough we all suffered for this trustfulness in the end.

After a stiff climb, we reached the point attained by the advanced guard of the day before. There we produced our compasses, of which we carried two, and took the bearings of the peak. Down the hill we went, cutting a path through the dense bush, till at the bottom we found a mountain stream, evidently one of the main sources of the little river, if not the river itself. This we followed upwards, rapidly ascending over its rocky bed. For hours we followed its windings, the sun scarcely visible through the dense foliage overhead. But we made more progress in this way than by cutting a path through the bush; so we kept on till our compasses warned us to leave it. Then, striking to the left, we went right up a mountain side, so steep and high that the thought crossed us that it must be the great Cockscorn itself. No such luck as that, though almost as good; when about four o'clock we heard W., who had gone on ahead, shouting—

"Here it is!"

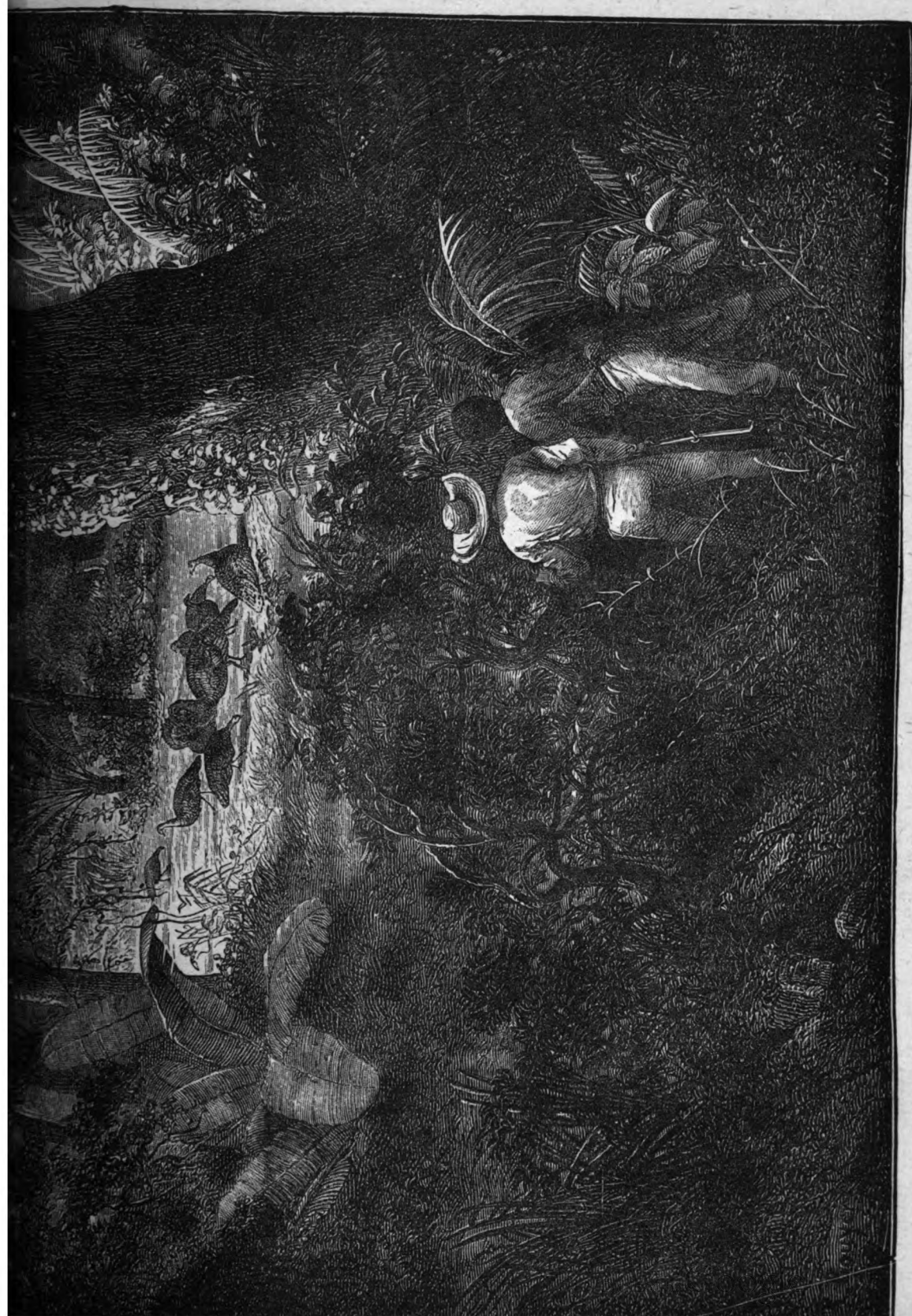
We, lagging behind, collected all the remaining breath left in us, and scrambled on, till at the top we joined him, and then beheld the object of our journey standing grandly up in all its majesty, and only a deep narrow valley between us. Heat, thirst, flies—all discomforts were forgotten; for now we were certain of success.

The scramble down the mountain was almost worse than the climb up the other side, but we got down all right, only some one had a narrow escape from a Tommy Goff, one of the most poisonous snakes in the country. The rearmost of the party—we marched in Indian file—found him lying in the path with his arm smashed; lucky for some one it wasn't any of our men. Then poor V. slipped in the rocky scum of the dry torrent we were descending, and brotra. They self up head first in a nest of red ants, or, as; ladies them here, fire ants. In an instant they were.



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him, and made him dance most frantically. The little ants give a very painful sting, and are not slow in letting you feel it.

At the bottom of our toilsome descent, we came upon a delicious mountain stream, cool, and clear as crystal. We drank our fill, and all agreed it was better than the best champagne. Now, I confess I am not altogether averse to that seductive liquid, especially on a hot day, and if it have a lump of ice in it; but for real thirst, when your tongue is dry and parched, there is nothing like cold water, and plenty of it. We camped that night without troubling ourselves to make much shelter, for, in fact, we were well tired after our long tramp. Curassow and dry biscuit, washed down with water, was our supper; but I think we slept well after it, though our beds were of the hardest.

To go into the bush, of course, was out of the question, for there the mosquitoes reign supreme, and one would not willingly intrude upon their territory; so we slept out on a sort of island in mid-stream, where the ground was strewn with great boulders. Masses of stone, polished by the floods of countless rainy seasons, and giving one some idea of what our clear, flowing, sparkling little rivulet must be at such times, to have brought down such baubles from the mountain sides. Though on our march we had seen plentiful signs of game—particularly in the soft places here and there by the side of the torrents we had crossed, where the freshly trampled mud showed the neighbourhood of wary and mountain cow—we resisted the temptation to follow them, and held steadily on our line, only bagging a couple of curassows by the wayside; consequently we were rather short of breakfast the next morning.

However, we contrived to quiet the pangs and gnawings of hunger with biscuit and roast mountain cabbage. This so-called cabbage is the green top of the Palma real, and the interior pith is a very excellent vegetable; at any rate, a great addition to dry biscuit. Shouldering our packs, we started soon after daylight for the mountain top. We had promised the friends we had left behind at V.'s plantation, that on that very day we would make a bonfire on the Cockscomb Peak, as soon as it grew dark; and they promised to look out for it, but evidently without much expectation of there being any bonfire for them to see. Indeed, they, like everybody else, had prophesied we should fail, as so many had before us. Of course, we were in high spirits at the prospect of keeping our appointment, and pushed steadily on, climbing up and up, through the dense, interminable bush; but very rarely getting a peep, through thick forest growth, of the peak, which towered high over our heads.

Thirst became very troublesome. Though shaded from the sun, the air was hot and close. All the water we had was little more than a pint; not enough for one, and we were six.

The bagulos were a delusion and snare. Though they hung from every tree in giant coils, they held but a drop of water each; and when a thirsty soul cut off a shunk, and held it above his eager mouth, he got but a scant supply of what he sought, though plenty of dust, and perhaps an insect or two. After a seven hours' tramp, the bush began to clear, and the way became a more steep and rocky. Then it became a matter of real climbing—pushing guns in front on to any ledge that could be found, and the proprietors hauling them-

selves after by the aid of roots and projecting rocks. In another hour we reached a rocky platform, covered with low scrub, and, looking about us, found we were actually on the top of the famous mountain, where foot of man, or at any rate white man, had never trod before.

Fortunately, it was a clear, bright, cloudless day, and the country round for miles on miles lay spread out before us—a marvellous prospect, and well worth all the toil and trouble we had taken to come and see it. To the north-east, hill after hill rolled away into the distance, forest-clad from base to summit. To the east the sea lay smooth as a mirror—all the headlands standing out distinct, but reduced, as in some vast bird's-eye map. Beyond the Cockscomb, to the westward, spreads a deep, broad valley, some fifteen or twenty miles across; well watered and, even at the height we were at, any one could see, teeming with vegetation, a very garden of the earth, as much of this country is, could it only be opened up by roads, and other hands than those of lazy Creoles and worthless Spanish Indians be found to till it. Perhaps in after-years, when people begin to tread upon each other's toes in the grand republic, or in England's colonies, one or other of those great nations may find it worth its while to turn its attention to Central America, sweep out this slum of bastard Spaniards which now defiles the land, and make it what its climate, soil, and resources entitle it to be—the richest and most prosperous in all the earth. These thoughts passed through my mind as I looked down on the glorious panorama spread out before me—desolate and lonely in its grandeur; for, far and wide as the eye could reach, not a sign of life could be seen. Narrowly as we scanned the horizon, no curl of smoke, no clearing was to be seen; all was uninhabited and waste.

After resting, and enjoying such a scene as is but seldom given one to see, and which also is totally beyond the power of pen to describe, we found ourselves compelled to change our plans. V., who had been ailing all day, but who had kept on manfully with the rest of us, was now seized with a sharp attack of fever and ague; he had to descend as quickly as might be, whilst yet he had the strength to do it. Not liking to let him go alone, we too went down, first setting fire to the dry scrub and moss on the mountain, in the hope that perhaps the smoke might be seen on so clear a day at our friend's plantation. On our return, we found it had been noticed. To tell the truth, I believe we were all glad to have to go down; for the prospect of camping out, without the chance of getting water, was not a lively one. And oh, the joy of seeing that clear stream again, down in the valley! It seemed almost impossible to swallow enough of the cool liquid to quench our burning thirst. That night we dined on biscuit and cabbage again—all but poor V., who was too sick to eat. Next morning he was better, though very weak; so, dividing his load amongst us, we started for the river again, following the path we had made in coming. Hard by the river, we came on fresh tracks of warry—this time not to be resisted.

Following up their sign along the banks of a small watercourse, we came upon a regular herd of them. They are keen of scent, though their sight is bad, and directly they winded us, made off at a great pace; but a volley brought down five, four large and one half-grown. The difficulty now was to get them to camp;

but the hands soon solved that. In a trice they were cleaned, and hung on boughs, where they were left till the men could return for them. Soon the three fellows marched into camp, two with a pig each on his back, and the third with two—the fifth was left behind—no small feat, as the animals must have weighed some 70 lbs. each. But these Indians are wonderful at what they call "backing." They carry all their loads on their backs, having a supporting band across the forehead; and though such diminutive little men, the weights they "back," with apparent ease, would make a navvy stagger.

That night we feasted on warry, and found it good, though, perhaps, just a trifle strong of flavour. The men salted the remainder for home consumption, cutting the meat into most untempting-looking ropes. The exciting part of the journey, and all difficulty, were over. Down stream we went, at a merry pace, shooting rapids in grand style, which had cost us infinite pains and trouble to ascend. It was ticklish work, till one got to have confidence in the man at the stern; for the stream ran fast, the turns were short, and the stones jagged and rough, in case of an upset. No mishap occurred, and we safely reached our friend's plantation on the morning of the tenth day after we had started. It was not altogether unpleasant to get back to the comforts of civilization again; but we all vowed we had mightily enjoyed our taste of the bush.

Roses on the Brink.

BY WILLIAM SAWYER.

CHAPTER XLIII.—REVENGE.

HARCOURT uttered a cry of recognition.

"Margaret! Alive!" he faltered.

"Yes," said Marco, in his most quiet, most bland and affable manner; "it is my happiness to be the means of reuniting a devoted husband and a disconsolate wife, who have been kept asunder for too many years. Margaret, this is the man who, having stolen you from my arms, and growing tired of his bargain, basely tried to murder you by setting fire to the house, from which he supposed he had cut off all means of escape. I saved you—I! while you were insensible, and in your last gasp—that I might restore you to him at a moment when my revenge would be best served."

"Your revenge!" cried Margaret.

"Yes; is it not revenge to tear you from the circle in which you move, to give you back to this penniless, hunted dog, my very good friend, who will be the more glad to welcome back his wife from the grave, as it effectually puts a stop to his promoting another lady to that proud position?"

"Devil!" muttered Harcourt.

"No, no; 'I who am cruel am yet merciful,' as your poet says. I might have brought this infliction on you—both of you—before. I waited till the vengeance of the law was about to take effect, and when that would, at least, save you from the agony of enduring each other's presence. In a few hours, my friend, you will be safe in Newgate, or some other place of safety."

"Is this so?" Mrs. Dormer-Paget demanded, eagerly.

"In all human probability."

"On what charge?" cried Harcourt.

"You best know of what crimes you have been guilty. The time is come when you should pay the penalty. Your foes are on your track. Even now they should be in this very house. Hark! What noise is that below? Some one is inquiring for you, madam; the servants are refusing you—it is useless. Ha! See, they are here!"

As he spoke the door opened, and the sturdy form of Jack Faroe burst into the room. A couple of police officers were at his heels.

"There is your man!" he cried, pointing to Harcourt. "You have the warrant of Colonel Duplex for his arrest. Take him!"

"On what charge?" Harcourt demanded, ashy white with alarm.

One of the officers answered promptly—

"For attempted frauds in connection with the *Khe-dive*," he said.

Faroe broke in, impatiently—

"And for the murder of my sister Margaret, and your own child."

A cry burst from the lips of Mrs. Dormer-Paget, and she rushed forward and threw her arms about Faroe's neck, to his no small astonishment.

"No, no," she cried; "not so bad as that. Look at me, Jack; I am your sister—I am Margaret!"

"Why, you are right—by all that's wonderful!" cried Jack Faroe, holding her at arm's length, and staring into her face with mingled astonishment and incredulity. "You were saved, then—saved from the flames?"

"Yes, brother."

"And your child—his child—what became of that?"

"Ah, what?" she exclaimed, suddenly turning upon Marco. "I forgot to ask that. God forgive me—was my child saved also?"

"Yes."

Harcourt looked at him in amazement.

"The mother and the child both saved?" he asked—

"and by your hands?"

"Both—and by my hands."

"And where, then," cried the lady, "where is my child—my darling? Does she live?"

"She does."

"But where?—where?—tell me where?"

"That you best know."

"I?"

"Certainly."

"But what—tell me your meaning. Ah! great Heaven, a light breaks in upon me! This infant saved by you—reared by your care—is—"

"Is Zerina!"

For the instant all stood aghast in terrible silence. That silence was broken by a laugh from the lips of the Italian.

"Ha! ha! did I say right?" he exclaimed. "Did I say true, that we of my blood never forgive—never forget? You, Margaret, have ruined your own child, and her doom was sealed by this fiend here, her father, who bartered her away for the shadow of his own safety—a shadow that eludes his grasp. Miserable wretches! your vengeance is complete. I leave you to the torture of your own hearts."

He waved them from him with his long, lithe, stretched hands, passed through the open doorway, and was gone.

CHAPTER XLIV.—AND LAST.

THE fact that Hilton Gathorne, *alias* Edmund Harcourt, had been arrested, and that under singular circumstances, which came to be variously reported, created no little stir and excitement. The frauds he had originated and carried out successfully were of so daring a nature that they had made a deep impression on the public mind, and the case was well remembered. The fact of his having escaped for so many years, while actually moving in society in this country, was also sufficiently remarkable to excite astonishment.

Rejoicing at his capture was general.

There was, however, one painful exception to it. When the news reached the ears of poor Eva Knowles, the blow struck her down with fever; she lay delirious, raving only of Edmund and of the secret marriage into which he had sought to tempt her.

The sight of her wrung the heart of her doting father; yet he declared to his sister Effra (who had come bustling home as if she had only been on a visit to friends and was eager to return) that he would rather see her pass away in that state of fevered prostration than have given her as a bride to one so utterly unworthy of her, as the man who had sought her hand.

Of that man the papers gave due information. He had been taken at once before the magistrates, where Jack Faroe had given evidence of a nature to identify him with the missing consul who had so abused the trust reposed in him, and on this identification he was remanded.

It was found to be exceedingly difficult to bring home to a prisoner a crime committed years ago, and in a distant part of the world. The cautious machinery of justice, which is chiefly remarkable for breaking down, was pretty sure to do so under circumstances of this kind.

But, said the papers, all would be well when Colonel Duplex, who had brought the case before the House of Commons in the first place, and was in possession of all the facts, returned from the Continent, where he was spending a few weeks.

Next day, these same papers contained a statement which promised ill for the interests of justice if they rested on no surer foundation.

Colonel Duplex had been drowned off the North Foreland!

The steamer in which he had left London, with his Zerina as his companion, had encountered rough weather on emerging from the river; it had blown hard, and there were heavy seas rolling. In foolishly braving the dangers of the deck, the colonel had, to the consternation of everybody, slipped, and been washed overboard.

Thus the very forces of nature seemed to conspire together to demonstrate that Edmund Harcourt had a charmed life.

Of course, the colonel's death resulted in another remand.

"The fellow will escape even now," thought Edgar Knowles, as he read his morning paper; "but he will surely never have the audacity to return to our circle. Thank Heaven! my Eva is safe!"

Meanwhile, neither Faroe nor Marco had any intention that the man who had wronged them, as Harcourt had done, should slip through their fingers. They held more than one secret meeting at the Lovely Nan, of

which Faroe had just become master, by the simple process of leading the blooming Pouter to the altar—a step taken to the howling discomfiture of boatman Jacob. But there was an element of mistrust in these meetings which promised well for Harcourt rather than the reverse. The two men hated and suspected one another—had done so for years—and this feeling was not at all lessened by what had recently occurred. Marco suspected that it was Faroe who had stolen upon him in the old house by the river, and robbed him of his papers.

Faroe denied this; but the other was equally convinced of the truth of his suspicions. Unfortunately, Faroe's denial placed him in an awkward position. He could not use the papers which served to criminate Harcourt, while at the same time refusing to admit that he had them. To use them would have been to criminate himself, and he had other objects in view—objects more serious than the gratification of his revenge toward Harcourt. Thus it happened that Harcourt was again saved, seeing that the conspiring together of these men was robbed of one of the strong elements that would have given effect to it. Of the two papers Faroe held, the one relating to the firing of the house in which Harcourt's wife was supposed to have perished was deprived of its sting by the fact of her still living, while Faroe could not use the other which contained instructions for his own death, without convicting himself of having stolen it.

Lucky Harcourt!

The secret hand, which had more than once tempted his life, and might now have crushed him, was thus rendered powerless.

But Marco had no intention that the man who had wronged him should escape.

There were still those other papers hidden away under the floor of his hiding-place, which left not the slightest question of the guilt of Edmund Harcourt, so far as his attempt to defraud in the matter of the insurance of the *Khedive* was concerned; and without a word to Faroe, he anxiously awaited the day of the remand so that he might step into the witness-box and volunteer his evidence—he having been Harcourt's secretary during the very time that the offence was committed.

For years he had pictured to himself a moment like that—a moment when, like one rising from the grave, he should confront the man he hated, with evidence which would utterly crush and overwhelm him, and now that time had come.

"To-morrow," he muttered to himself, as for the last time he repaired to the old house by the waterside—"to-morrow, and I pay off old scores in full. The man who robbed me of the woman I loved—the man who has made me his scapegoat from first to last, shall find that there is truth in the proverb about the worm. It can turn, and it can sting."

Dark, vindictive thoughts these to rage in the heart of a man as he stole alone in the dead of the night through the echoing chambers of the deserted house.

While speaking, he drew near the room in which his treasures were stowed away.

To his amazement and alarm, there was a line of light gleaming under the closed door.

Somebody was in the room!

Advancing on tiptoe he drew close, turned the handle

of the door noiselessly, and peeped in. A man knelt before the fire. A dark lantern by his side sent a stream of light across the floor; in that stream glittered gems, gold, plate, all the treasures hidden away beneath the flooring, and now exposed to view by him who knelt, about whose identity there could not be a question.

It was Jack Faroe, who had come to avail himself of the discovery he had made a few nights before, when he had detected Marco intent over his treasures.

With a wild scream, the Italian sprang upon him. Faroe rose at the sound, and in an instant they closed in a death-struggle. All the pent-up bitterness, all the hatred and rancour of years was concentrated in that moment's fierceness. The sturdy seaman grappled with his opponent with all the strength and adroitness in his power. The Italian yelled, bit, and tore at him, after the fashion of his countrymen in moments of uncontrollable fury. The gems and the money were trampled under foot, the papers kicked hither and thither in the struggle. In the course of it, both attempted to have recourse to weapons; each was conscious of what the other was attempting, and bent on preventing it. Marco struggled to grasp his hidden knife, and struggled in vain. Faroe was more fortunate. He had not, of course, ventured into the house, seeing the purpose for which he came, unarmed; and after a time he, by a sudden movement, succeeded in snatching a pistol from his waist.

The next instant there was a loud report.

Then the arms of Marco relaxed, he loosened his hold on the man he had grappled with so fiercely, and slid down at his feet—utterly helpless and motionless, his head on his breast, his beard dabbled with blood gushing from his neck.

Faroe gazed at him in momentary consternation.

As he did so the face was suddenly illumined, a bright glare lit up the prostrate figure, the room, the pictures on the walls, the jewels, and the gold scattered on the floor.

Turning hastily, the murderer saw what had happened—the lamp on the floor had ignited the papers, kicked and scuffed about; the flame had caught a loose curtain screening the fire from the door, had run up it like a snake, and instantaneously that side of the room was in a blaze.

On that side of the room was the concealed treasure.

Turning from the dead body, Faroe ran toward the flames to secure what he might, but was met by a scorching glare, which singed his whiskers and his clothes, and compelled him to retreat.

It is recorded in the annals of the fire brigade that on that night the old house by the riverside was destroyed by fire. No mention is made of the finding of human remains, or of jewels or money. In all probability Marco was destroyed in the furnace glow of the burning house. What became of his treasures, Jack Faroe might or might not have been able to tell. But he was never questioned. Soon after he disappeared from the Lovely Nan, leaving his Pouter sad, but not utterly disconsolate; and nothing would have been known of his fate had not a Catholic priest some years after forwarded to his widow money and papers from Smyrna, where he died.

With the destruction of Marco's papers went the last scrap of evidence against Edmund Harcourt, who was

soon set at liberty. He at once quitted England, and was never either seen or heard of again by those interested in him; but they never doubted that he engaged in some fresh career of villainy, and, in all probability, passed through it scatheless, seeing that to all appearances he bore a charmed life.

Eva recovered the shock of his loss slowly, and with difficulty. But she was never the same bright, joyous creature again. A sadness, that was not melancholy, rested upon her; she was placid, amiable, and unresisting. But she suffered rather than enjoyed life. To the last she entertained a secret belief in Edmund Harcourt. She held that he was more sinned against than sinning, and, though he might have been concerned in transactions which none could approve, she still believed that his nature was frank and open, and his heart capable of sincere affection.

For some years she held aloof with an invincible repugnance from the cherished friend of her girlhood, Ruby Framlingham; it seemed as if she could not forget that interview in which Ruby had warned her of Harcourt's villainies. In time, however, she brought herself to take a more just view of the matter.

One bright summer evening, she ordered the coachman to drive her down to Surbiton, to a villa there on the farther bank of the Thames, which at that hour was glowing in the rosy gold of the setting sun.

The villa was surrounded with a garden—a perfect bower of roses, honeysuckles, jasmine, and all that could render such a place delicious. In the midst of it, facing the row of French windows, there was a sloping grass-plot. As Eva entered, there lay tumbling on the grass a rosy infant, in a very blossom of a white frock, kicking and crowing with delight. A sweet voice in the distance sang to it.

Eva advanced towards the child, which then looked up with a startled face and began to whimper. At the same moment a girlish, yet motherly form, appeared at one of the windows, and the face of Ruby Pembrose—no longer Ruby Framlingham—was to be recognized in the shadow of a broadly flapping hat.

"Eva!" she cried, rushing forward and holding out a hand.

"Forgive me, Ruby, forgive me!" cried Eva, taking the hand frankly, and bursting into tears.

In that hour all was explained, all was forgiven, and the broken friendship of years was renewed. When Arthur Pembrose, coming home from business—it was Framlingham and Pembrose now—entered the garden in search of his little wife and darling child, he found the latter on Eva's knees, while the former knelt at her feet, tremulous with happiness.

On the picture of that happy evening let the scene close.

And let us briefly record what befell the only remaining set of actors in our little drama.

The untimely death of Colonel Duplex freed Zerina from the toils he had woven about her, and, in all probability, saved her from a disastrous fate. She at once returned to London, but not to the Dormer-Pagets. Her eyes had been opened as to them and their circle, and though inexperience prevented her altogether understanding them, she was sufficiently convinced that they were not the people with whom it would be safe to remain.

All her sympathies were with Marco, who had reared

Wanderings in Half-a-Guinea.

BY MAJOR MONK-LAUSEN.

CHAPTER XVI.—SCORPION FIGHTING.

THE wood of the ymolder tree (*Arb. Tophet semi-Guin.*) possesses the property of burning, when dry, at an intense white heat, without smoke or flame; and since, when once fairly aglow, it is very slow of consumption, it would be invaluable for all purposes where charcoal is used. Of this wood a fiery circle ten feet in diameter had been traced. Tata, Squeely, and Coger sat together just outside the edge, their three opponents being ranged exactly opposite. Each of the six held a strong native basket before him.

Peter Tromp and I were allotted places in the inner circle, which was completed by elders of the tribe, one of whom was to act as judge. Behind was a second circle of squatters, and then came a double row of men on their knees, behind which the remaining spectators had to get the best glimpses they could; though by the aid of fallen trees, inequalities of ground, and a convenient hillock, they got placed pretty well, and few of them were quite out of it.

"First couple," cried the judge.

At the word, Tata and his rival held their baskets out over the fire line, and shook the scorpions which were respectively to champion them into the arena.

I must request the reader to dismiss from his mind all idea of the puny reptiles he may have seen or read about under this name. The Half-a-Guinea scorpions are of the size of small lobsters, and the present were fine specimens.

Indignant at their confinement, and with the cavalier manner in which they were released from it, they curled their deadly tails over their backs, and rushed at the circle; one making straight for Peter Tromp, who endeavoured to turn a back somersault in his dismay, to the sad discomposure of the serried ranks behind him. But there was no danger; when the scorpions reached the rim of fire, they turned at once, and rushed wildly about the ring till they met. The pause they made was curious to witness. I could fancy I heard each say—

"Hallo! This is serious! My temper is that aggravated I am bound to pitch into you, in spite of your sting. But that sting—oh, my! Having one myself, I know what it is."

A hubbub of audible human voices likewise arose.

"A packet of tobacco on Grumpy's scorpion."

"Done, with you."

"I'll back Atah's for a canister of powder."

"Put it down."

Or words to that effect. One might have imagined oneself in a Christian land.

The scorpions advanced, retired, jumped sideways, sparring as it were for an opening, each endeavouring to put in his tail without getting stung in return. Then suddenly they dashed at one another and closed, the armed extremity of each striking over its head, with a clatter, clatter, clatter, on the scales of its adversary. Again they retired, and again they were locked together, becoming less cautious as the intoxication of battle gained upon them.

Soon the excitement, the shouting, and the betting amongst the spectators rose to a frantic pitch. Even I

myself became interested in the contest, and rejoiced inwardly that there were no policemen to walk in and spoil the sport.

After the sixth round, Grumpy's scorpion was all abroad; he twisted, writhed, crawled round and round, turned over on his back, and, with a violent spasm, ended his venomous career.

The victor stalked proudly about, finally walking up to his dead enemy, and placing a foot on his body. I doubt not he would have liked to crow, if nature had not forbidden him that triumphant exercise. As it was, his mute pantomime was most expressive.

His triumph, however, was short-lived; for he, too, had been wounded in the conflict, and soon felt the effects of the virulent poison. Spinning round like an impaled cockchafer, he writhed, and died. But he was the conqueror, and Tata's wife was handed over to him at once.

"Second couple!" cried the judge; and a pair of fresh scorpions were turned into the arena, where a renewal of the former scene occurred—in this case, again, as in the succeeding combats, both competing scorpions succumbing, the one that died last being adjudged to have won the *parti*.

It was really most exciting sport—superior to cock-fighting in the fact of being devoid of cruelty; for it seems absurd to impute that sin to any device which results in the destruction of scorpions, especially such a horrible species as is indigenous to Half-a-Guinea, the sting of which is so virulent as to cause the nails and hair of the victim to fall off within five minutes, and a most agonizing death to ensue in an hour at farthest.

When the wit was asked to exert his influence to put down prize-fighting, he replied—

"Why should it be put down? Two rascals, who deserve a good thrashing, each get it; and a good thing, too."

Though there may have been something fallacious in his reasoning where men were concerned, a corresponding argument in favour of deadly combat between these vicious and venomous reptiles would be unimpeachable.

The present main was a truly sporting and important affair, and the tobacco, beads, wives, knives, powder, lead, and other coveted goods that changed hands over it were something surprising. So far as it affected my own men, the result was this: Tata gained and Squeely lost a coveted wife, and Coger had to take one back contrary to his wishes. However, he put the best face he could on it, when I congratulated him on being once more joined to his former spouse—for I chose to ignore his ungallant reluctance to be blest—and only expressed regret that her second domestic arrangement should have been disturbed for so short a visit as his would most likely be.

"For," he observed, "I am the servant of milor, and milor will not remain long time with my people."

"I don't know about that, Coger," I replied; "my plans are not fixed yet. Besides, I should not like to separate man and wife."

"Oh, milor, do not think about that!" he said, hastily. "I would not leave milor for Tong, and Tong would be no good."

"What are you making there, Coger?" I asked, seeing he had a string in his hand.

"Nice new toko, milor," he replied, grinning. "Tong

scolds plenty, sometimes scratches plenty. Then plenty toko is necessary to live."

"Coger," I said, much shocked, "the man who would put his hand upon a woman, save in the way of kindness, is unworthy of the name of a British sailor."

But as, in my indignation, I made the quotation in English, without translating it, the effect of that noble sentiment was lost. Though, indeed, the benighted heathen may not have had that high opinion of the British sailor which animates the gallery of a transpontine theatre; so that the warning that he was in a fair way to lose the chance of rising to that ideal would have been lost upon him anyhow.

What was of more importance, I learned that one of my Krepas, at any rate, was ready to follow me when I separated from the tribe and continued my wanderings.

Of the Poopooans, Atah and Tulu, I was safe, unless the former was persuaded by his wife, Piti, to attach himself to the fortunes of her tribe, which, as the said fortunes were at a very low ebb, I did not think probable. But with regard to the remainder of my Krep followers, I felt doubtful, as it was hardly to be expected that they would be ready to give up their freedom, now that they were reunited to their friends and relatives. For it must be recollected that they considered themselves not as hired servants, but as slaves; and even if they were reconciled to the idea of my mastership, they could not tell but what I might take them to the coast, and resell them to some hated Dutchman.

I could only reckon with confidence, then, upon three attendants in my further wanderings—a number which I felt to be so insufficient, that I determined to remain some little time in the village where I found myself, and see what arrangements could be made.

I took this opportunity of making some inquiries into the conditions and prospects of the people amongst whom I was thrown. They must, I imagine, be of a different race from the inhabitants of Half-a-Guinea, with which neighbouring island they are often confounded; for by the reports of recent travellers it seems that the Poopooans have no cemented society, but roam the country in isolated families; whereas the Half-a-Guinea natives were divided into two distinct tribes, who had been opposed to each other from time immemorial, though the last great battle had proved so disastrous to the Krepas that they had never been able to establish any organization since; and though they gathered together here and there, within a limited area in villages, they feared to cultivate the ground, or pursue the simple arts and manufactures for which in happier days they had been famous, to any great extent, since the slightest symptom of prosperity was sure to draw on an attack from the victorious and dominant Kralls. The personal appearance of the people is also far more comely than that of the natives of Half-a-Guinea; and, indeed, some of the women were as handsome as those of Otaheite.

Some of their huts were composed of bamboos, fixed in a circle, the ends tied together at the top, and the sides plaited in with basket-work; but others were of a description which was novel to me, being simply made out of a large description of gourd (*Pumkinium periyolinum*), swelled artificially to gigantic dimensions, by keeping a small projection on the top of it per-

petually immersed in water from the earliest stage of its growth. When the vegetable was some ten feet in height and about thirty in diameter, the bottom was cut evenly off, the inside scooped and drained out, and the shell, when dried, made a very snug habitation—the only drawback to which was, that a particular species of insect would sometimes make a dead set upon the dwelling, and literally eat its inhabitants out of house and home.

Of whatever materials it was formed, the entrance to the hut was invariably a semicircular hole, about two feet high, so that if you wished to make a call upon any one it was necessary to do so on the hands and knees. From long custom, however, the people had acquired a knack of diving so rapidly in and out, that the general effect was not so grotesque as might be imagined; and from a little distance the colony bore something of the appearance of a large apiary, with much magnified bees going in and out of their hives. Sometimes, however, a returning Krep would find an obstruction inside which caused him or her to stick in the entrance, and this gave rise to a little practical joking amongst the young people, which was taken in good part, as they are a light-hearted race; though, from the resounding smacks I sometimes heard, I would not answer for their being equally light-handed.

The palm huts admitted the air through the interstices; but those formed of gourds had little windows cut in them, which could be closed with the pieces which had been removed. There were no chimneys; but, as fires were never lit inside, this did not cause the inconvenience it generally does in uncivilized habitations.

CHAPTER XVII.—THE SPY.

I HAD been living with these people, studying their habits, shooting in the neighbourhood, and amusing myself with the invention of little devices, which gave them a great idea of my power, and tended to establish an influence over them, for some days—perhaps some weeks, for there was nothing to mark the flight of time—when, one day, I was disturbed from my noontide siesta by an unwonted stir and hubbub; and going to see what was the matter, I found that an unfortunate solitary Krall had been caught prowling about the village.

Like children who have got a mouse or a frog, they were preparing to have a game with him. He probably had some purpose for being in the neighbourhood, and as it was considered desirable to find that out before he was put to death, extreme violence had been forbidden by proclamation; but as it was considered only reasonable that the people should have some slight personal satisfaction out of an enemy, he had been tied up in the centre of the village, and any man, woman, or child might flog him, provided the toko only was used, serious torment being reserved for the bouquet. But when I saw the expression of his countenance, and the marks impressed by those vicious little nuts which constitute the knots of the toko lash upon the whole surface of his cuticle, I doubted whether more ingenious cruelties could have inflicted much greater suffering.

The toko does not draw blood, or permanently injure the person beaten with it, but the momentary pang it can be made to impart is agonizing, and this poor Krall was being operated upon with a will. And

though I am loth to say anything which seems like a reflection on the sex, truth compels me to own that the ladies did seem to possess a particular knack of finding tender spots to cut at. This seemed unkind, because the poor wretch, who was cross-examined at intervals, asserted that the charms of one of them had alone attracted him to the spot; but still it was natural that they should be exasperated by the calamities which the tribe had suffered at the hands of its victorious enemies, and feel disposed to make one, when they did catch him, pay for all.

As neither this individual Krall nor his people had done me any harm, I pitied his sufferings, and, addressing a group of elders who stood somewhat aloof, I told them that I thought I knew a method of extracting any valuable information he might possess, if they would stop the flogging, and give him over to me.

They readily assented to this; for they were really anxious to know if their enemies were in force in the neighbourhood or not, and whether it was their intention to molest them.

So I ordered the man to be cast loose and seated on the ground. I gave him a drink of water, and waited till he was somewhat composed. Then, squatting in front of him, I fixed my eyes upon his, and slowly commenced the mesmeric passes. In two minutes, his head sank forward on his chest: he was in a profound trance.

The circle of spectators shrank back in silent awe. With the exception of my own party, none of them had seen such fetish as this before.

"Hold your head up," I said.

No movement.

I poured fouds of magnetism into his chest, and repeated, emphatically—

"Hold—your—head—up!"

He raised it slowly, unwillingly.

"Now your nose itches; it does—itches insufferably."

He twisted the feature in question, and raised his hand towards it.

"But you cannot scratch it—no!"

His finger stopped about an inch from his nose, and could get no nearer.

Seeing that my power over the sleeper was well established, I willed away the irritation in question, and continued—

"Speak! What is your name?"

"Mouch."

"Who sent you?"

"Krakrane, chief of the Kralls."

"What for?"

"To see if the two white men had as many guns, knives, beads, good things, as people said."

"What people?"

"Krall people, who have been watching the Krep village from the other side of the river."

"Why were they watching?"

"Krep people have been left quiet a long time, that they might get corn, skins, grease, horns. It must be time to strip them."

Murmur of indignation, which momentarily overcame the awe in which the assembly was wrapped.

In the Alfoer language, every description of ivory is expressed by the word answering to "horns."

"When is the attack to take place?"

"To-morrow, at sunrise." (Sensation.)

"From what direction?"

"The east and north; the river was crossed last night."

"The Kralls are coming in two parties, then. How many warriors in each?"

"About two hundred?"

"And why did Krakrane want to know about the white men?"

"If they were as rich as had been reported, and had left the village of the Krepes, a party would be sent on their trail to shoot them down separately."

"When were you to return with your account?"

"At once, if the white men left. If they stopped, I was to stop too, and watch."

"Then the attack will be made all the same?"

"Yes; if I do not return, Krakrane will know that the white men are still in the same trap."

"How were you so stupid as to let yourself be taken?"

"I saw a pretty girl come along into the wood where I was, and thought I could catch her."

I turned to the assembled crowd, and inquired whether any one wished to ask any further questions of the prisoner. But consternation had dulled the wits of the poor Krepes, and they could think of nothing. Atah, however, always a cool and intelligent lad, said—

"Ask him, milor, how many guns they have."

It was a happy thought (if I may say so without infringing Mr. Burnand's copyright), and I put the question to the clairvoyant.

"Every fourth man has a gun," was the reply.

I need not tell the intelligent reader that it is the general import, and not a literal translation of the actual words of the natives, that I profess to give; so that if questions and answers seem to flow in too ready and apt a manner, he will understand that the words did not really pass so glibly, but that there was a good deal of mutual misunderstanding, some confusion, and that sentences had to be reconstructed very often before the actual meaning was satisfactorily conveyed. This caused the directness and lucidity of the clairvoyant's replies to be the more weird and startling to those around. For I have always found in cases of mesmeric trance, where mind communicates directly with mind, that the difficulties of dialect disappear, and words express the meaning clearly. Indeed, when magnetizing a person with whose language I was imperfectly acquainted, I have caused him to speak in mine, which he knew nothing of when awake.

When the conversation excited by the disclosures of the spy had somewhat subsided, an assembly was called together, and organized in the manner which has been described—the men composing the inner circle, the women behind; only on the present occasion the warriors all bore their weapons, and it was serious to see how few of them had firearms, considering the large number of muskets possessed by their enemies.

The gravity of the situation caused the general body to leave the direction of affairs to a few trusted leaders, and induced these last to be practical and concise in their suggestions.

All were agreed upon the necessity for speedy flight; but while one advised that they should at once put the river between themselves and the Kralls, another reminded them that there were other Krep villages within

two days' journey on the same bank ; and if they could effect a junction with them, they might find themselves strong enough for resistance.

Another point in dispute was as to whether they should carry any of their possessions away with them ; the Kralls, it was argued, only sought for their property, and if they found nothing touched in the village, would let them retire without molesting them ; others did not like the idea of relinquishing all their worldly goods without a struggle.

One of the speakers had just finished, when a female voice, which I recognized as that of Piti, cried out, from the rear—

"Ask what milor thinks."

There was a murmur of applause, which subsided into the silence of breathless interest, as I stepped forward and made the following speech :—

"Oh, Krep, I am a stranger and a guest ; being, therefore, of a modest and retiring nature, I only speak on important things when I am spoken to. But since you ask my opinion, I tell you that you should not go away at all ; but that it will be a wiser plan for you to remain and fight. I hear some of you murmur, and well understand what you are thinking of. You are saying to yourselves, 'Four hundred men are coming upon us, and we are only one hundred ; they have got a hundred guns, we have but twenty.' But, supposing you try to escape, they are sure to follow ; for it is your guns and powder they want most of all, and I think you do not intend to leave the few weapons which remain to you behind. Well, if they follow you, when they come up they will have you at their mercy, as they might have done in your village if you had not caught the spy, and my fetish had not made him tell their intentions. But, now you know when they are coming, you can make ready to receive them. You have got a capital position, as the river protects you from being surrounded, and the woods, from which the Kralls will attack you, are out of gunshot. I will show you how to make your twenty guns more than a match for their hundred. Besides, if you accept my aid, you may count on eight guns more in the hands of my men, besides those carried by my white friend and myself. Now, this gun which I hold in my hand shoots twice for once, and will kill at a distance which the bullet of a Krall would not travel in two journeys. If you go, I and my friend Peter, and our eight men, will stop and fight the Kralls by ourselves, and beat them too. But if you choose to stop, and do all that I tell you, the victory will be more complete, and you will have a good chance of once more making the Krep tribe prosperous. You will never have such an opportunity again. I have said."

I sat down amidst a storm of wow-wowing, accompanied with the clash of weapons and defiant gestures.

The impulsive Alfoers only wanted a leader, and were now as ready to fight as they had lately been to fly.

If any are inclined to blame me for taking part in the trivial feuds of these people, let them reflect that I was myself threatened, and, in spite of my big words, could not hope to escape being robbed and murdered if I did not throw in my lot with the people amongst whom I found myself.

There was no time to be lost, so I at once took measures for meeting the attack. The village was

constructed on the banks of the river, which made a bend here, protecting it from anything but a canoe attack on the south and west. My first measure, therefore, was to mark a line on the land side, and set the whole population—men, women, and children—at work, entrenching the village on the north-east or land side. And though at first they would throw the earth up on the inside instead of the outside of the ditch, and make the latter too narrow, I soon managed to make the men whom I placed in charge of the working parties understand what was required, and a very serviceable earth-work rose around our position.

Almost in the very centre of this, and a little in rear of the trench, which I had brought forward to an angle, in order to enclose it in the line of defence, there was a little eminence, some feet higher than the huts, which I caused to be entrenched with particular care, carrying an earth parapet entirely round the summit, with the exception of a narrow ramp for entrance and exit.

In this spot, which was the key of the position, I determined to take my stand, with Peter Tromp, Atah, Tulu, and my six Alfoers ; for if a panic should seize upon my new allies—which seemed to me a possible contingency—I had no idea of being swept away by the stampede ; and did not despair of my little band, on the coolness and courage of which I could depend, being able to hold its own in this redoubt against any attack which was not vigorously pushed home ; and whatever success the Kralls might meet with at other points in the line, there was reason to anticipate that the superior fire I could maintain would cause them to approach that particular spot with some hesitation.

When all these works were in good train, I sat down on the top of the hillock, and studied the ground in front attentively. The woods from which the enemy would debouch were some seven hundred yards off. Immediately opposite, there was a patch of swamp, which was doubtless the reason why the attack had been planned from the north and east, which were the two sides of it. On the right, or northern side, halfway between the village and the wood, was the place where the scorpion fights had come off ; and here the rising ground which was mentioned in the description of that entertainment, and the trunks of certain fallen trees, afforded cover, behind which the Kralls would probably gather in some numbers when they found that my bullets could reach them.

On the left, or east front, and somewhat nearer our lines, a clump of palm trees offered similar shelter. My first impulse was to have the latter cut down ; but, besides that this would be a sign of preparation which might warn the enemy to be wary, a plan occurred to me by which it seemed possible to convert these rallying points into a source of advantage.

Amongst my baggage I had a small electric apparatus, with some hundreds of yards of thin copper wire. I called Atah and Tulu, and directed them to take a man a-piece, and go, the former to the hillock on the right, the latter to the palm clump. Each was to dig a hole three feet deep, and fix in it one end of a wire, which was then to be conveyed, slightly covered with earth, straight to the redoubt.

AN important discovery has just been made at Pompeii, consisting of a number of gold and silver objects, and close to them the carbonized skeletons of two men.

The Man in the Open Air.

IT is some few years ago, and, since the late Duke of B.'s time, all is changed now on that sweetly pretty Hertfordshire trout stream. I had obtained a day's fishing—only a day—in these exclusive preserves, and, in order to be upon the water at sunrise, slept at what was once as comfortable a snugery of an inn as any in the county. The landlady had been housekeeper to the Duke, and she knew well how to make her customers both at home and happy. So, early as I was out of bed, a servant was up before me, to start me into the dewy air with a good protective lining of rum and milk.

I had not far to walk to the stream, and having heard much of the immense swarms of large trout—which were so jealously watched and pampered that you had but to throw your fly upon the water to have half a dozen of the jewelled-coated beauties contending for the worthless prize—it was, I concluded, the very place for me, for I was then but a poor stick at the feathered lure.

So certain was I of success, that I had taken down with me four small hampers, regularly labelled and addressed, to send a brace or so of the fattest trout, as promised, to a choice family here and there. Indeed, so "cock-sure" was I of an ample slaughter, that I made arrangements with the station-master at W., and the ostler at the inn—the latter to ride over and catch the train with the anticipated fish, and the former to ensure their delivery in London in time for the dinner of my friends.

After this duty done, thought I, I shall have plenty of time to spare, and think of a nice, handsome dish for my more private disbursement. I was, however, sorely punished for this counting of chickens; for hours passed in my lashing the waters, cracking off flies, and trying green tails for fernshaw, the blue dun for the march brown, the yellow sallow for the stone fly, until I had exhausted my book, and my arm was as weary as if it had been pumping all the time into a sieve.

What was to be done? Ben Ostler would be seen in another hour, mounted, and waiting on the wooden bridge by the fall with the empty baskets; and nothing but derision, after my extreme boasting, would await me in town! True, I had got two small trout; but those I was so ashamed of that, instead of letting them repose, like an honest angler, in my creel, I stowed them away stealthily in an inner pocket of my fishing coat.

How often I have recalled that piece of meanness, and punished myself by its confession! No keeper had hitherto challenged me. I heard that they were occupied in ferreting on a distant part of the estate. Once or twice I was tempted to put on a worm; but it was not the unsportsmanlike notion that deterred me, but the fear of being caught in the act, and that I knew would be visited by instant orders to cease fishing, and the deprivation of any chance of a renewal of my leave.

I was startled, while these thoughts were passing through my mind, by finding Stubbles, the head keeper, at my elbow, his presence being first made manifest by the strong odour of velvetene.

Stubbles, having satisfied himself that my permission

was correct, pocketed his tip with a touch of his hat, and expressed his unfeigned surprise at my want of luck.

"They'll rise presently—they mostly does in the evening—and then the water will boil alive wi' um," observed Stubbles, encouragingly.

"Presently!—in the evening!—that will be too late for what I want."

And I made a confidant of Stubbles, and a friend as I thought, by another tip.

Stubbles did not, or would not, however, understand me. He affected the greatest faith in the legitimate line and the artificial lure, as the only means available to ease my anxiety and start my little hampers on their errands of grace.

I had not, throughout the morning, been unobservant of the tenants of the water, and a sudden "throe of genius," as Ruskin has it, came to my help.

"Stubbles," I observed, turning my gaze full upon the face of the keeper, mottled with purple and russet, like a Ribston apple, "you have pike in this stream."

"Jack, sir!" exclaimed Stubbles, starting with indignant astonishment—"jack!—not a half-inch of such a creature. It would be the last week of my being let look arter the water, if I wor to let one of those brutes get his head into the stream."

"Nevertheless, Stubbles, I know that there are jack here; and if you are equally certain that there are not, I will make you this bargain—that if I put on a minnow, and take a jack to convince you, you must let me catch a trout by the same means. That is, for each jack I kill, mind you, I am to have a trout, provided I can get it."

"There's no jack here," repeated Stubbles, emphatically—"that you may rely upon. You might, of course, take the trout, while you were saying as how you were arter the varment. But fishing's not allowed with minnie, even to the Duke's nevvies, nor no one else—nor is grub, nor worm, nor," added Stubbles, "live May-fly. That's law."

"Well, now, look here, Stubbles—let me try the minnow for a jack. If I lay hold of a trout the first time, I will throw it back again; but if a jack—for I know they are here—you shall own that I am a better judge of the stream than you are."

"I can't myself see much tottals agen it, as you puts it—to convince yourself, mind," wavered Stubbles; "because the suspicion of those darned critturs being in the water would do me no good with the steward. But," continued Stubbles, striking his stick firmly into the soil, "I marnt, sir, indeed I marnt."

"Stubbles, I must say you are an honest fellow. I only wish my father's keepers were half as inflexible. But is there any objection to my catching a minnow to see what sort are here?"

"No. I don't see no ways as that's agin the rules, perwided it is not used for the trouts."

It did not take me a minute to kick up a worm, pinch enough off the reptile to charge the point of my fly hook; then, casting it over the shallows, I had a shoal of these greedy pigmies after me, one of which laying firmly hold of my bait, I led into the deep water, near some weeds. Dash!—a little jack, which my experienced eye had previously detected looking out for the fry, had in turn seized it.

"Well—I'm bounced," shouted the keeper. "There's

no mistake—curse un ! I saw the brute as plainly as could be.”

“Yes; and here he is,” said I, as I drew a baby jack, not more than a quarter of a pound, on to the grass. “What do you say to our bargain now, Stubbles?”

“I say just the same, sir,” repeated the imperturbable Stubbles, “you marnt fish in this water with the minnie.”

“Very well, Stubbles. I have no wish to break the rules, if you do not admit the necessity. Will you, therefore, oblige me by taking this jack up to the steward, with my card and compliments, and say that that is only a specimen of the hundreds of its destructive fellows which are in the Duke’s favourite trout preserves.”

“Oh, lord ! that would never wash,” cried Stubbles, in dismay. Then, after a pause—“I think I had better take the ’sponsibilities, and let you kill as many of the darned lot out as you can, sir. I’m sure they would be cheap enough at a trout a piece to get rid of them.”

But Stubbles, although conquered, was far from being convinced. It was clear the permission went sorely against his notions of his duty; and I felt for him, but thought of the empty hampers.

So I rigged up, without any further loss of time, some regular trout spinning tackle, and going to work in earnest, spun the minnow alternately in the swift and lively trout water and the quiet deeps; taking almost regularly—a regularity which astonished Stubbles beyond expression—now a big trout and then a small jack; and when Bob came down with the pony and the baskets, the latter were soon lined with fresh green sedges, the lovely fish laid thereon looked as pretty as present could be, and I saw my messenger trot off in full time to catch the train, and ensure me lasting reputation with the ladies fair as a redoubtable knight of the rod.

Indeed, I got a great name by that bit of arrant dodgery likewise amongst my fellows. Even my cousin—jungle-beating Alf, as we called him, who was said, while out in India, to have riddled a tiger every morning before tiffin, and anointed himself with lion’s fat of his own killing—pronounced me a very clever fly-fisher. But between you and me, whenever the subject of a “minnow as a bait for trout” happens to form the topic of conversation, I am not so hardened but I feel awfully hot-watery all down my back, as if my vertebrae were the fount from which all scalding blushes spring.

WINES FOR THE SICK.—Port wine is more used than any other kind of wine for the sick, but it is also a wine more adulterated than any other, and therefore requiring extreme caution in its selection. A new adulteration of the article is mentioned as having been recently introduced, one which is, in some cases, actually dangerous, especially when partaken of by feeble or delicate persons. This is described as an artificial colouring, consisting of a mixture of ozalin and magenta red. The aniline colours, objectionable in themselves, are the more dangerous, because they not unfrequently contain arsenic. The adulteration is detected by shaking the suspected wine—and all cheap wines are to be suspected—with an equal volume of amylic alcohol—that is, fusel oil. If genuine port, the amylic alcohol remains colourless; if adulterated, it dissolves out the colouring matter, and itself appears of a purple red.

The Egotist's Note-book.

A CONTEMPORARY comes down rather hard upon the Maharajah Dhuleep Singh for his prowess amongst the partridges, of which, on nine occasions, he shot to his own gun two thousand one hundred and fifty—one day’s work being seven hundred and eighty. This is, after all, not sport; for what honest lover of shooting would not be content to return from his stump through the stubbles with a dozen brace? The writer of the lesson to the Maharajah wishes that the same sort of adventure might now and then befall the Maharajah as once occurred to an English preserver. This gentleman’s keeper had reared some hundred pheasants, and the day came for those pheasants to die. But the covers were beaten in vain; only a chance wild bird was found, and that got away untouched. When the gallant sportsmen had gone home disgusted after their bloodless foray, the keeper’s bride, a young and tender-hearted woman, opened her bed-room door, and let the birds forth in safety. She had called in the poor creatures that she was used to feed, which knew and loved her, and had “hidden them by fifties,” as Obadiah once concealed the prophets in the cave.

I never heard the National Anthem sung in Ireland, but there must be parts where it would not be very well received, even in Dublin; for the other night, at a lecture in the Rotundo, by Denis Dowling Mulcahy, a free fight took place. In the course of his address he referred in condemnatory terms to Cardinal Cullen, and a difference of opinion arose in the body of the hall. Great excitement prevailed, which ended in a fight. An attempt was made to resume the lecture, but it was interrupted by cheers for the Fenians, hisses for the Queen, and violent expressions. Mr. Butt was denounced by a lecturer. This is essentially Hibernian, this finishing all with a free fight; but it does not add much to one’s opinion of the loyalty of our neighbours.

Deputy M’Dougal, the other day, presented to the Court of Common Council a report from the City Lands Committee, recommending that Temple Bar should be removed, with the exception of the north and south walls. He said that the subject had for thirteen months been under the consideration of the committee, and they found that no satisfactory improvement could be carried out at this important thoroughfare until the Bar was removed. Mr. Lawley moved, as an amendment, that the report should be referred back for further consideration; and this was declined. How absurd ! It had only been thirteen months under consideration—a mere trifle this. What are thirteen months? By the way, I should like some one to have Mr. Lawley under consideration for thirteen months, and then refer him back for further consideration. They had better look sharp, these City magnates, or down will go the Bar without any consideration for the people below.

We are getting to be a terribly levelling lot, for in matters political we could not leave the Queen’s son-in-law alone; but, on an objection being taken to the right of the Marquis of Lorne to remain on the register for

a house in Grosvenor-crescent, the revising barrister had to declare the right to vote *nil*, and the Marquis was struck off the list.

By order of the Lords of the Admiralty, the Admiral-Superintendent of the Devonport Dockyard has formally and severely reprimanded an engineer student for replying to the examiner in a facetious manner. The student when asked, "How would you proceed to get up steam?" answered, "Tighten your funnel stays, and regulate your funnel draught, then look up to Our Father and say, 'I am ready to go home if the boiler fronts come out.'" This comes of having an "accident Ward Hunt" at the head of the Admiralty. The above reads like a joke from a book of Joe Millerisms; but our readers will be surprised to hear that it is sober truth from the naval intelligence of a few days back.

The Slade examination has commenced, and been adjourned. Black spirits and white, blue spirits and grey!—what schoolboy twaddle it all is! Why, let Mr. Slade or any of his medium friends do some of the tricks described in the presence of a few children of ordinary capacity, and they would "find them out" in five minutes. How long would it be, think you, before somebody who is sharp—young Brooks, of Sheffield, to wit—would exclaim, "I say, mister, I know how that's done."

That clever sledge-hammer writer of fiction, Mr. Lawrence, has passed away. He was well known for his "Guy Livingstone" and other stories of a school which was very popular amongst lady lovers of muscularity some years ago.

A telegram from Rome says that the Harveian Society should know that the University of Rome is about to erect a monument to Cesalpino for having discovered the circulation of the blood. Since then, another claimant has been nominated; so let him who deserves it wear the palm. By the way, it would be a far greater boon to poor humanity if some one would discover the circulation of the coin; for it sticks very fast sometimes.

The Yankees mean to have another try with the oars, for the students of the Cornell University have resolved to challenge the winners of the next Oxford and Cambridge boat race to a four-mile race on the Thames for fours or eights, with coxswains.

A young American, here at school, said he hated England, because a boy could not go a yard away from the road without treading upon somebody's strawberry path. The boys of a Turnham-green school must think the same, for they have been fined for damaging fences in crossing fields while playing at Hare and Hounds. If any animal requires room, it is the boy, and it is grievous to see him cribbed and confined. One pities the little prisoners of St. Paul's and other London schools, and wishes them in the country. Turnham-green occupies a sort of middle position; but even here there is not enough space. Certainly, fences ought not to be broken; but farmers need not strain at such gnats as the boys scuffling over their fields, when they swallow such camels as the horsemen and a pack of hounds.

That was a sad accident at Hampstead the other day, when the labourer in a sewer was swept away by an influx of storm water; but what an example it gives of the efficiency of London drainage, that the poor fellow's body, which was searched for high and low, should be discovered at least seven or eight miles away, at Abbey Mills, Stratford, near the outfall, Barking.

A breach of promise case has been tried, where a clerical gentleman courted a young lady whom he had educated from housekeeper to teacher, and then declined to marry. The letters were of a most voluminous character, one of his beginning "My love, all is well! The Keeper of Israel has heard our prayer, and brought me to you safe and sound! Ebenezer!" and hers invariably being prefaced with "My precious John!" He became cold at length, however, and broke off the engagement on the ground of their social disparity. Alas, that such things should be! "Ebenezer!" I say myself. "My precious John," though, proves to be as good as gold to the lady when tried in the legal fire, for he is condemned in £850, and, I presume, costs. Will he exclaim, after this, "My love, all is well!" and marry?

Is this advertisement a joke?

TO TRAVELLERS AND OTHERS.—Should this meet the eye of C. H. S***h, who is engaged to "Goggy," by communicating with her will hear of his mother and something to his advantage.—S. M. H., Post-office, Larkhall-lane, Clapham.

Coming from *Larkhall-lane*, it looks suspicious. If it be not, how pleasant to be present at the nuptials of S***h—which, of course, does not mean Sarah—and "Goggy."

Here is a portion of a circular being distributed in North London:—

"**MADAME** ———"

Having discovered a new Hair Dye which dyes the Hair a beautiful Brown or Black; it is most efficacious requiring only one application, will neither stain the skin or linen.

"Ladies waited upon at their own residence by appointment."

By this it will be seen that Madame ——— "will neither stain the skin or linen." Any one would think she was supposed to be black, and likely "to come off." Will anybody try the "efficacious" hair dye, and then teach the lady spelling and composition?

THE season has arrived when every one is thinking of turning from the sultriness of town life to the pleasures of a country tour. Ladies who take very little exercise when at home, with true British courage often undertake long and tedious journeys. It is of the highest importance, under such circumstances, that the clothing should in no way impede the proper circulation of the blood, but especially should the old but bad practice of gartering the leg be avoided. Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London, has provided the only means of remedying this in his New Patent Stocking Suspender, which he will send by post for 2d. extra. The prices are—Children's, 1s. 6d.; maids', 2s.; ladies', 3s. Our advice is to write at once for a pair.

Departed Mediums.

IN an age when the maxims of a former wisdom are superseded by the exigencies of a public which wants money, and another public which desires novelty, the only means by which a genuine article can hope to maintain its reputation against the counterfeit is by a persistent repetition of its excellences; and, so far from "good wine" metaphorically needing "no bush," it absolutely and imperatively requires an entire tree for a sign—nay, a whole grove of trees, leading from the bottom of the high road right up to the inn door. Does any one covet success for a valuable invention, an important discovery, a marvellous specific, a philanthropic scheme, a benevolent purpose, a commodity which needs only to be seen to be appreciated, a well-known article the benefits of which have always been universally recognized, let him advertise. The busy public are too thoughtless to appreciate the claims of the greatest benefit which is not prominently brought before their notice at least twice in twenty-four hours. The ingenious public who sell are too well aware of this weakness to leave a chance of success to anybody who does not avail himself of prominent places, large type, effective posters, and all the other accessories of modern commerce.

To such proportions has this necessity grown, that advertising literature may be said to have taken possession of our streets, and even to have stretched far out beyond the suburbs and into once remote country districts. It is true that the invasion of metropolitan thoroughfares by gigantic painted temples and timber structures, drawn by horses and covered with enormous posters, has been made illegal ever since they culminated in the temple devoted to magic razor paste and the startling announcements of the "monstre concerts," twenty years ago; but, worse than this, every street corner, dead wall, railway bridge, hoarding, empty house front, and even church porch and public monument, is devoted to the purpose of blatant assertions emphatic with fat notes of admiration, impertinent queries to which no one desires to give an answer, or announcements of a maddening character which become aggressive from their continued iteration.

In all sorts of out-of-the-way places, harmless people who desire nothing better than to be let alone are morally assaulted, questioned, threatened, and generally bullied, by placards of all colours and in every variety of "striking" letter. On the brick arches of far-off canal bridges they are required to answer questions as to personal identity in a way which is to the last degree irritating, by whitewash letters two feet long; on remote park palings they are requested to consider the momentous question, "Why pay rent?" are advertised of the opening of local assemblies for dancing; or, with shocking abruptness, are told where to go for a cheap funeral.

Two daily newspapers contend for the widest area of wall and hoarding, with the respective declarations of the largest circulation and the largest size; glowing cartoons and many-coloured devices stare from the sides of unfinished houses, and make themselves emphatic to riders on the outsides of omnibuses, to whom they appeal on behalf of worlds of magic and the great host of "entertainers."

Seeking refuge inside a public conveyance, the tra-

veller is no better off, since omnibuses are provided with their own particular advertisements; and neatly framed allusions to tea, teeth, and toys, glare down in blue and yellow from the roof. Railway carriages of the second and third class are but advertising vans, in which waterproofing, cheap clothes, and surgical instruments alternate, with other less prominent articles, in a maze of bewildering variety. Even Hansom cabs have recently been chartered by enterprising tradesmen; and a startling announcement in a neat oval border glares menacingly from the splashboard at the surprised "fare," who, during a hasty ride, is completely under its influence.

If any one should innocently suppose that the advertising system is confined to public life, he would be mistaken; for an ingenious agent has already adopted the plan of gumming little circular tickets inside the hats, upon hall tables, or in the lobbies at concerts, assemblies, and public dinners. The spills for lighting cigars at taverns are provided gratuitously by an ingenious gentleman who has an interest in the theatre; and we may yet see our butter come home with a sensation announcement marked with an advertisement pat on its snowy surface, or our bread delivered with the brand of a new music hall on the top crust.

But the mediums with whom we have been most familiar have been moved on and moved off by the new regulations, which have instituted a police-ocracy in London. The board and sandwich men no longer walk in the gutter, bearing alphabetical devices like tabards, or sensational announcements fastened like colours which had been nailed—not to the mast, but to the human trunk by iron clamps. They have gone the way of market taverns and decent supper-rooms in the exercise of a legislation which aims at vice, and hits respectability over its head.

Before we bid farewell to the poor, broken-down mediums, however—who will no longer walk for their livings in the gutter, but may perhaps lie at the work-house door, and be locked up occasionally in the police cell—let us speak of them in the present as amongst our dissolving views.

Near the corner of Endell-street, and not far from St. Giles's Church, a large company of these mediums may be seen any morning, at nine o'clock, congregated at the mouth of a dirty little square of houses, known as Hampshire Hog-yard, where, in a dilapidated tenement which seems to have been subject to the ravages of a fire several years ago, and not to have been worth repairing since, the boards and banners of the band are stored. This is the armoury, in fact; and a strange, broken-down, miserable army they are, amongst whom no modern Falstaff even would go for recruits. Surely, such a collection of old, patched and ragged habiliments could not be found even at the Clothes Exchange in Houndsditch. One elderly individual rejoices, it is true, in a pink-striped waistcoat—the cast-off morning garment of some smart footman; but he has evidently not long come into the business. For the most part, the banner-bearers are depressed in appearance; and, with their worn, frayed, and incongruous garments, their half-washed faces, and their melancholy listlessness of manner, seem anything but hopeful of the British public, to whom they instrumentally appeal.

The neighbourhood is just waking up by the time

they arrive: that is to say, the clinking of a hammer is going merrily at the farrier's shed down the yard; the door of the common lodging-house has long been open for the egress of the lodgers, some of whom are doubtless amongst this company; the Irish costermongers in the neighbouring street are placing their stalls, and gaily commencing their morning quarrel under the superintendence of three policemen; the hairdresser in the main thoroughfare has taken his shutters down, and is briskly ready to shave, wash, and brush hair by machinery at the rate of twopence a head; and even the dog-fancier next door has let in the daylight upon a shaggy white terrier, with red-rimmed eyes, who blinks at the passers-by with the expression of a detected felon.

Lounging at the corner of the yard, and scenting the morning air with the odour of their short black pipes, the mediums wait until a messenger arrives with a key to open the magazine, when they go, in melancholy groups, to receive their banners, and to assist in harnessing each other to their iron yokes. Another minute, and they are placed in melancholy array, after which they go to their several beats—some of them being sorted like an animated toy alphabet, the Music Halls being warned not to linger in back streets; and the Theatres, some of them, repairing to the colonnade in Bow-street, there to receive fresh devices for the ensigns which they are doomed to bear all day, with an interval for such refreshment as they can procure for the few halfpence they have to spare on leg of beef soup or saveloys.

Now and then a spirited proprietor will gather together a select corps—a sort of picked body-guard—clothe them in fantastic dresses, and give them strange insignia to bear as a stimulus to public curiosity; but these efforts never last long, and the body-guard itself, after a brief effort to keep their uniforms from inevitable shabbiness, and the substitution of incongruous garments for those with which they are originally provided, is ultimately disbanded, and its members are once more enrolled in the regular corps of “advertising mediums.”

A PERILOUS ASCENT.—The most formidable mountain, perhaps, in the world, the South Dome of the Yosemite Valley, in California, has not only been climbed by a Scotchman named Anderson, but it is to be made practicable for travellers of exceptional nerve by a stair constructed up the back of the Dome by this enterprising climber. “No description,” says a correspondent at San Francisco, “can convey any adequate idea of this singular mountain. . . . The walls on either side of the valley are for five miles a close succession of bare granite rocks, cut down with smooth face as if by a knife, and rising sheer from the valley to the average height of 4,000 feet. The fact of a perpendicular wall, three-quarters of a mile high, of bright grey granite, can scarcely be grasped by the mind, and must be seen before it can be realized. Imagine the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral multiplied a hundred times and cloven in half—the one side a precipice of 6,000 feet from top to bottom; the other side forming a perfect quadrant for 1,500 feet from the top, as smooth and bare and regular as the side of a ball—and some faint idea can be formed of Anderson's terrible feat.”

The Hug of a Bear.

IN one of my late wanderings, I found myself in a valley among the mountains of Norway, accompanied by a friend who was as fond of hunting as myself. The opportunity for a bear hunt was too tempting to be lost, and one morning we set out to climb the mountain in search of an enormous animal which had been described to us by the natives. We were accompanied by our host, and a bear-hunter named Finck, thus forming a party of four, armed with guns. My companions also carried a keen knife on each side of their belts; while I was provided with a blade on which I knew I could depend. The heavy clouds which hung about the mountains when we started soon dispersed, and we advanced steadily towards the spot where we expected to find our game, travelling almost in a straight line up the steep mountain paths.

At the end of two hours, I came to a standstill, quite tired out, though my companions, accustomed to these ascents, did not appear to be out of breath. Nostrum, our host, tearing a strip of bark from a birch tree, twisted it cleverly into the form of a horn, and presented it to me full of iced water.

The draught refreshed me, and we continued our ascent, leaving here, safely picketed, the two reindeer which we had brought with us.

We had now passed the region of vegetation, and the rocks which frowned before us were bare and sterile. The cold was increasing, while beneath our feet a thick fog hid from our sight the valley below, which appeared like a river of ice; and above our heads were only rough masses of rock, patches of snow, and the blue sky. Not a sound was to be heard, except when a stone was occasionally disturbed by our passage, and rolled down the steep mountain side, or we caught, from a distance, the dull sound of falling water. The view was sublime, though; for we were now in the midst of the wildest natural scenery, and were very near the supposed habitation of the bear.

Finck, who acted as our guide, now stopped short, and we followed his example. He then took off his thick blouse, retaining only his leathern vest, his proceedings being closely followed by his companion. Then he began to climb, like a snake, over the rocks; and, at the end of an hour, returned to us with the announcement that he had really seen the ferocious beast.

We were not more than three hundred paces off, in a straight line, but were obliged to make a very long circuit, on account of the steepness of the rocks, and the necessity of choosing our ground so as not to be taken at a disadvantage, should our expedition end in an encounter with the bear.

At last, however, we reached the spot indicated, and immediately formed our plan of procedure.

The sport bore scarcely any resemblance to any to which we had been accustomed. There was nothing exciting or enticing about it: no horns, no barking dogs, no shouts from the beaters; but, in their stead, an intense cold—which made us all shiver, but the more especially—a rigid silence, and a total want of the picturesque.

We were going to risk our lives, without winning fame, or even notoriety, should we lose them; for no one would know our fate. I could not help asking my-

self, at that moment, whether our existence was not too precious to be staked against the skin of a bear, though when we had set out I had been animated by very different feelings. In short, I felt now like some one who, having dreamed in a comfortable arm-chair of fame and fortune, suddenly finds his vision disappear when he is roused from his reverie to meet the hard realities of everyday life.

I had dreamed of fabulous combats with bears; I had even seen myself on the very spot where I now was; but I had not thought of the dull reality—the fatigues of the journey, and the consequent exhaustion; of the unsteady aim which would be the result, and the probability of a terrible death if I had been in the company of less daring hunters.

The place where we stood formed a small platform, of some fifteen or twenty yards square, to which the inequalities of the rock formed a rude fence, while running from it on one side was a narrow passage of some forty or fifty yards long, leading between some rough blocks of stone to a small open space like a courtyard, at the bottom of which was the bear's den.

It was in this passage that, creeping upon his hands and knees, and protected by the jutting masses of the rock, our companion had been able to see the animal of which we were in search.

It was this little platform, then, that Finck had chosen for our battle-field; and it was here that he wished to bring the monster. At the first growl, Nostrüm and the Laplander were to spring on the walls of the defile, and wait in silence, that the bear, on discovering us, might not be too much alarmed; while Finck was to place himself behind me at the first signal.

I advanced alone, very cautiously, in the direction of the cavern, and, on arriving at an angle in the defile, suddenly saw before me, at the entrance of a cave some four or five feet wide, a dark form, which at first appeared indistinct, but which I soon recognized as that of our quarry. He was lying down, after the fashion of a dog or a sphinx, his body half out of the cave, and his head erect, and had evidently discovered us some time before; for, as is well known, the bear is endowed with a very acute sense of smell.

I stood still. The brute did not stir; but in the place of his eyes, which I had not yet noticed, I now saw two small white spots, steadily increasing in size.

For a moment I felt as if spell-bound; then the consciousness of my position seemed to return, and I took a step forward.

The spots became eyes, the ears quivered; and, on my taking another step in advance, the whole body of the monster was agitated, and a low growl escaped him.

That was his last warning, his last threat.

I instinctively raised my gun. The bear was ready, and advanced towards me. I uttered a cry on seeing the animal upright, for he was more than six feet high, while his eyes, which had been white as melted silver, became red and staring; and he snorted angrily, and ground his teeth with rage, presenting an appearance perfectly hideous.

I had begun to retreat, so as to draw the angry animal to the place chosen by Finck; but he had quickly lessened the space between us, and, fearing his embrace, I fired, two other shots accompanying my

own. We were now about ten feet from the spot to which we had intended to lure him.

I heard a terrific roar, followed by a cry of distress from Finck, who, having rashly darted forward to my aid, had been seized by the bear, and was now held in the vicious hug which I had narrowly escaped.

The Laplander had seized his enemy by the neck, and held him tightly, so that it was impossible for the bear to bite him—all he could do was to crush him with his enormous fore-arms.

It is generally supposed that the bear kills his victim by pressing him to his chest, but this is a mistake: he squeezes him between his fore-arms, which he uses as a vice; his conformation not permitting him to cross his arms as a man would do.

It will easily be understood, then, of what importance it is that the hunter should throw himself first on the animal, seizing his neck, so as to prevent him from biting, and keeping the arms free, so as to strike the creature's head—especially behind the ears, or on the nose, spots which are extremely sensitive. A shot in either of these places, or in the eye, is always fatal.

The intrepid huntsman had dropped his knife while rolling with the bear over a projecting piece of rock, which had cruelly torn his hand, and he had been unable in the struggle to draw his second knife. The grasp that held him was so violent that he was unable to utter a cry. I thought the contest terribly long, and we all drew nearer, when I at once perceived that poor Finck was disarmed, and could then understand why the bear was still alive, though bleeding profusely. He roared and groaned in a horrible manner; but there was not a moment to lose, and I slipped my knife into the fellow's hand.

A minute later, a hearty cheer rang out—the bear was conquered. His red eyes still seemed to threaten us, but all danger was past, and a few minutes after he was dead.

Finck was covered with blood, and his legs were torn by the creature's claws; but a draught from my flask revived him, and his wounds were soon bathed in some water from a spring.

Nostrüm, in his capacity of surgeon, declaved, after examining the wounds, that cold water compresses, and the use of the fat of the bear as an ointment, would cure our friend in a few days; and his prediction proved correct.

In spite of his wounds, Finck insisted on cutting up the bear himself. He took off the right foot, that he might not lose the reward for it which is offered by the Government. The rest of the operation took very little time, and the skin and the meat were placed on the backs of the two reindeer, which had been brought to the spot. One of my bullets had gone within two inches of the heart, and the other a little more to the left. The other two shots had struck the animal in the throat and in the shoulder; but none of the wounds were mortal.

We found on our return that our expedition had lasted six hours.

I naturally felt a wish to taste the flesh of our bear; but though the meat is considered a delicacy by the Laplanders, I found it very disagreeable to my palate. This may have been partially in consequence of the natural repugnance I felt to it; but it seemed to me

too much like wild boar's flesh, and the strong, oily flavour was very unpleasant.

We had several more bear hunts during my stay; but though we killed several, we had no more such exciting adventures as the one I have described. I should mention that these brown Norwegian bears seldom attack a man unless wounded or irritated; but when they are once roused, it is war to the death, for there is no escape, and woe betide the hunter who tries Finck's method of saving himself.

Alluding to this characteristic of these animals, a friend once thus gave me the impression formed during a hunting trip—

"The bear," said he, "is a perfect gentleman. If you let him alone, he does not so much as look at you; but if you insult him, he will pounce upon you, and kill you without scruple."

The Man in the Open Air.

WHEN the trap was brought round to take us to our snug quarters on the banks of the Thames, the pony—a very handsome one—and its harness were looked well over by the captain, with evidently the eye of experience—tightening a buckle here, and loosening another there, and taking off the bearing rein entirely and throwing it to the ostler.

"Here, Joe," cried he, "take this, and see whether you cannot put it to a better use than handicapping an animal that has got its work to do."

"You are not, then, an advocate for the bearing rein?" I remarked, as we started.

"It's a horrid invention," replied the captain, "and has of late years become a 'reign of terror' amongst the London carriage horses, through the thoughtless cruelty of fashion. Who had the honour of its invention I cannot say, or even the nation from which it came. In my early days it was in but little use, in comparison to the shameful and shameless extent it is carried at present, and is now as severely applied as it is possible with a total disregard of the feelings of the animals. It is a foul and unfair instrument," added the captain, getting somewhat excited, "and one very easily abused, since no guiding hand testifies the pressure it inflicts, with severity unknown, except to the suffering animal itself. It has become, indeed, so common, and so cruelly misused, that it is, if possible, a greater evil than the whip; and the more grating, because the infliction passes unseen, and hardly obtains the least notice or commiseration. I knew Bracy Clark well; he was a vet of high character. Like all the eminent men in this profession, he was remarkable for his humanity; for long before Rarey came to teach us, practically, the value of kindness, he inculcated—although theoretically—the same doctrine. He used to say that the want of safety in the horses going well was urged as a pretence for this infernal machine. 'But why,' he would add, 'not rectify the shoeing, the cause of most of the danger?—which can be done without difficulty, as hundreds can testify; and then see if the bearing-rein is necessary.' You must excuse my warmth upon the subject," went on the captain, "but I love horses next to woman, and I should never be tired of talking of them, and speaking for their advantage. Now, no one can deny but that the free motion of the head of the horse, simi-

larly to the swinging of the arms of a man in walking, is necessary to preserve the equilibrium of the animal, and is particularly essential when the horse stumbles, to enable it to recover itself. Horses, in making a slip—particularly cart horses—almost always fall when their heads are confined; but not so when free. The object of a bearing rein itself, I maintain, is an unworthy one; and only to conceal too often the fatigue the poor animal is suffering. When I tell you, sir, that these wrenching irons, with their complication of powerful levers and double bits which fill the mouth, and go far towards the root of the tongue—made, indeed, to prevent the poor wretch from getting a little ease from its agony, by projecting that lacerated member to the healing atmosphere of the external air—when I tell you that it is manifest, from the construction of the instrument, that its whole force is exerted on the jaw and the roof of the mouth; that it has power to pinch the jaw with excruciating violence, even to fracturing the bone—and this, with branches of unusual length, has often happened—you may forgive my detestation of the whole affair. Yes, these gag-reins and bits can absolutely crush, and bruise, and totally destroy the tender covering of the inside of the mouth. By violent pulling, or if the horse should fall upon the ground with these levers, little less than the fracture of the jaw can be expected; and I have now a piece of a broken bone from the jaw—as large as a filbert—of a magnificent animal, which Rogers (at one time a great veterinary surgeon) presented to me. But I fear I am getting too horsey; shall we talk of fish?"

"No," said I, "pray go on. Anglers, or other men, should not be destitute of feeling for anything that is dependent upon our will; and with permission not only to make notes of what you tell me, but when opportunity occurs to publish them, I shall feel grateful for a continuance of your observations."

"I could have no greater encouragement," observed the captain, evidently pleased; for it was clear he knew as much about horses as he did about fishing, and I began to wonder what he did not know. "Believe me, the true biting of a horse does not require complication, or harshness, or severity; but every purpose is best served and obtained by the direct contrary. For harshness is much more likely to produce disobedience and danger than to prevent it; making horses commit, from pain or rage, the very faults we complain of, and then—oh, sapient man!—attempt to remove by a further severity. I have been a sporting man, and a hunting man, and a tooler of four-in-hands; and I can recall the time when the sporting man and the hunting man—yes, and the traveller also—used to deride as preposterous and unjockey-like these long lever bits—as machines both unfair and betokening ignorance or cowardice, or mal-address in the person using them. Indeed, to ride hard and sharp then, as it was called, was left alone to the butchers and their greasy-headed, blue-frocked apprentices. But now the custom has become almost general. There are many who have yet to learn that the fallacy most habitually injurious to the welfare of beasts, and one which is intended to shut the mouths of those who feel for their sufferings, is in that reply so often used—'May I not do as I like with my own? Didn't I pay my money for it?' This—supposed to be a *non sequitur*—has almost invariably followed any occasion of interference in favour of the poor

victim. It has its origin in our ignorance of the truth that nothing is our own; that whatever we possess has been intrusted to us by Divine Providence; and that it can only be ours, and we can only deserve it, by acting according to the laws of right. But how difficult to enforce the principle upon the obstinate and selfish mind! I declare, when I sat upon the box, and held the ribbons behind four musically-hoofed steeds, I found it impossible, even after years of habit, to forget the nobleness and usefulness of the creatures, who appeared as proud of my sway over them as I did with their behaviour. Indeed, often have I seriously thought how thoroughly mean and ungrateful must be that man who was unmindful of the benefits conferred upon his kind by the horse, and abused them. Let every driver who flogs his horses as if they were machines furnished with motion by mechanical appliances, be taught to consider upon what he is performing. Let him consider the strength, the natural wildness, the generous ardour of the creature that he coerces; and then reflect upon the docility planted there. How that meek creature, so 'compact of fibre,' turns at his bidding like a little child, instead of priding himself on the mastery. Take the carriage horse, for instance, in the freshness of its youth, when he is best fed and best cared for; sometimes starved by an unprincipled coachman, always exposed to his temper or caprice; when passion can go no farther in the stable yard, receiving in the stall the bitter remnant of his wrath; treated as he pleases when out of his master's sight, no power of telling the ill-usage, except that apprehensive rearing of the head at his attendant's approach which every master of a horse should look for with sedulous care. This, such as it is, is the brightest chapter of the coach-horse's life, omitting the school-days of his training. And," added the captain, feelingly, "I wish to my heart this ill-usage was confined to servants and grooms; there are gentlemen, perhaps few in proportion, whose temper and conduct render them equally unfit. Nor would I exempt the ladies; for it was but the other day I attended a meeting of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and although every sentiment of humanity which emanated from the speakers was vociferously applauded by an audience principally of the softer sex, the carriages in waiting possessed horses the heads of nearly every one of which were buckled up into the most unnatural of positions; and these noble creatures were doomed, as clearly as experience could show, to wear out their usefulness for show, in less than two or three years at most, and in one ceaseless round of agony when in harness. And yet we are told that the custom is necessary for safety. Bosh!—worse than senility; for you have but to follow these same horses, when discarded as useless for fashion's servitude, to the dealers, and there you will find them, not transferred to the knacker, but to our street cabs, in which, relieved of the monstrous gag-bits and levers, they obtain freedom of limb, and last very many years, really better cared for than under the heedless, cruel treatment of dukes, duchesses, and dowagers. For years the team in the Quicksilver, and several other public coaches I could name, ran their stages of hundreds of miles without bearing reins, and—Who goes there?"

This exclamation came from the captain, and at the

moment I was thrown forward in the cart by its sudden stoppage. In the gloom of the evening I could see a man at the head of the pony, who must have suddenly sprung out of a copse on our left, and seized the bridle. The next instant I was almost blinded by a strong and lurid light, which rose slowly into the air, making all around as plain and distinct as day.

"All right, master," cried the man—"I beg pardon; we are expecting Trolly and his pal this way, and in the darkness I mistook the cart."

"No harm done," replied the captain, "unless my alarm rocket has put them on their guard if they are near this. What have they been up to now?"

"They're in the wood, sir, somewhere, with an air gun, after the pheasants; but they have only three roads they can take without swimming the river, and we must have them. The rocket, sir, may do good, as it will stop their little game."

This rocket was one of the captain's inventions, and certainly, had it been known in the times of Dick Turpin or Jerry Abershaw, would have startled those worthies somewhat considerably, as in ten minutes afterwards, as we drove along, we found the cottagers and others all making their way to the spot, presuming, at the least, some great conflagration of farm or rick yard had taken place.

"You should get hold of that man," observed the captain—"the one who stopped us in the lane by mistake. He is as brimful of poaching anecdotes, the tricks of the covert, and, indeed, of the road, and the booth and fair, as any one I ever met with. We will have him one night up at the cottage, if you are going to stay, and you may then provide yourself with half a dozen note-books, at least; for give him his grog and pipe, and let him talk, and he will go on for hours, without in the slightest degree drawing upon his imagination."

We found two friends, both anglers, in the parlour; and as the captain would not hear of their quitting that night, tea was brought in, and we were all soon in that cozy style of conversation into which fishermen invariably drift. They were strangers to that part of the Thames, and were pleased to hear that they had fallen into such good quarters. The elder—they were both under thirty—was an experienced pisciculturist, and a practical and experimental breeder of fish of several kinds.

The conversation had turned upon the floods with which the Thames, in common with other rivers, had been then recently visited. He observed that the science of fish culture had not done so much for the angler in advancing his art as he had expected, and he regretted to find that aquaria were not taken much advantage of by the intelligent piscator for watching the habits of the feeding of fish, their mode of taking their food, indifference to and rejection of the bait, which, he felt convinced, would materially tend to advance the powers of their captors. He instanced the fact that all the carp tribe, in which the barbel, roach, &c., were included, took their food by suction; that the upper lip in most of the carp tribe is capable of being extended beyond the lower lip, and brought down to the same level, so as to form an inverted cup on the bottom of the stream, and cover any small body, which is readily thus drawn into the mouth—for how else could it do it rapidly and easily in water?

Let any one try to catch a grain of falling bread or

any light substance in his hand in a bath. If he moves his hand quickly, the motion will be communicated through the water to the object, which will consequently evade his grasp. We were referred to the "Rod in India," by Henry Sullivan Thomas, in corroboration, if necessary, of the facts elicited by observing fish in our aquarium. That writer says he has seen in India, mahseer, a species of carp, sucking in their food in countless crowds, in places where they were habitually fed by the worshippers and priests at a native temple, and have heard their loud, sob-like noise as they sucked in air as well as water, in their hurry to secure the grains in the scramble.

Anybody who has watched gold fish in a globe will have seen them constantly sucking in water—drinking it, as we used to think in the dark ages, really breathing it—that is, sucking it through the gills, which are their lungs, for the purpose of getting out of the water the oxygen it contains. Throw in some boiled rice, and observe how the fish take it from the sandy bottom, and you will see the upper lip thrust out from the socket, and brought down over the rice, the fish the while not swimming level in the water, but with their tails just enough inclined upwards to allow their pectoral fins to work without touching the bottom. As a proof of suction—and suction only—you will see that although the fins do not touch the sand, their slightest vibration disturbs it, while the sand round the mouth suffers no such action. Now, this close observer inferred from this that *all* the carp tribe are accomplished bottom feeders, which the angler admits in regard to carp proper, perch and barbel, but he denies it to roach, and almost invariably fishes for them with a bait unnaturally suspended off the bottom instead of upon it. There are, however, anglers who do the reverse; and it is admitted that nearly all the largest roach are taken thus. Not, be it understood, in moving water, for there a pellet of paste or a portion of a worm may be met with in mid-stream without exciting the suspicion of the fish; but in eddies and tranquil places the same does not obtain.

There is something said about the peculiar formation of the upper lip in the roach tribe in Greville Fennell's "Book of the Roach," but the above is sufficient to give an inkling of the drift of the speaker's remarks. He said that observations he had read in the Rev. Livingston Stone's "Domestic Trout," in reference to their breeding, had led him to look upon the visitation of floods as a positive blessing, rather than otherwise, to the fish in a river, and was led to think so from the following circumstances:—

The author found his young fry of trout in the breeding troughs and artificial ponds dying by thousands, and those that were left losing their appetites, and avoiding the current. He felt sure that the fine, thin film of mouldy matter, the result of the minute remains of the liver and curd they were fed upon, and which could be seen on the bottom, had become putrescent, and was fouling the water, and he removed the fish to clean the troughs. This revived them somewhat, and they began to eat again; but they lacked their natural vivacity, and looked lank and ill-favoured. He then began to reflect carefully on the matter, and it occurred to him that their artificial food might be wanting in some tonic element indispensable to health, and that liver and curd, and nothing else, might be to trout like

feeding a dog wholly on olive oil—the most nutritious thing in the world, but which soon brings on an ulcerating disease that kills him in not many weeks. The symptoms with these babies certainly indicated it.

He might have got no farther, but he noticed that some of the young fry which, by accident, happened to be where a little mud was occasionally disturbed, did better, and appeared thrifty. He also remembered that the wild trout in the natural brooks are never so lively and voracious as just after the streams have been muddied by a shower. Then it suddenly flashed upon him that mud or earth, with its multiplicity of constituents, might possibly contain the deficient element. At the same time he recalled the great absorbing power of earth, which might, perhaps, absorb the foul exhalations from the bottom, at the same time that it supplied the needed tonic. He shared the common prejudice of muddying the water where the trout were; but the crisis was an imperative one, and he determined to solve the problem.

He poured in earth, enough to cover the bottom half an inch, making the water so thick with mud that every fish was obscured by it. He watched anxiously for the water to clear, to see how they came out of it. The effect was magical. It had revived them all. A change for the better was certainly noticeable at once. In twenty-four hours the sick ones were nearly themselves again, and in two days they were all better fish than they ever were before.

Earth or mud is the last thing one would suppose suitable for a fish, so associated in our minds with pure, clean water; yet it is an indispensable constituent in the diet of young trout, and unless they get it, either naturally or artificially, they will not thrive. After a while, and when they get larger and stronger, you may return wholly to gravel; and when they are turned out into a natural stream, nature will take her usual care of them.

Here, then, was an analogy to the state of the river previous to floods—the gravel at the bottom becoming coated over with a filthy slime of deposit, a compound of animal and vegetable putrescence; the fish in the clearest of possible water, yet sickening and languid; when down comes a flood, which brings with it the deodorizing influence of the fresh soil from the meadows, with their revigorating salts and tonics, scours the bed of the stream of all impurities, makes the enamelled pebbles shine again in their various hues, and, after subsiding, leaves the fish in restored vigour of health and appetite.

The only drawback in a flood is that it may reach the lime-pits of the fell and skin-monger, wash off the surface of the arable land the injurious chemicals of artificial guano, or the saturations of the banks on which sheep have been treated with mixtures of corrosive sublimate and other deadly ingredients. But the latter are the works of man—works which Nature repudiates, and has nothing to do with.

The younger stranger was not of so philosophical a turn, but more mercurial in his discourse, flying from subject to subject, and resting upon none. I got, however, a good anecdote anent our craft out of his discursive remarks.

The captain and I had alluded to the keeper we met in the lane, and I had expressed my wish to meet him,

to indulge my passion for the collection of tales of adventure. He here struck in—

"We were talking of trout, and are now speaking of keepers," said he. "Shall I tell you how I got hold of a dish of the one, and the blind side of a very Cerberus of the other? 'My story has an unctuous smack,' as the old play says, 'it's so like poaching.'"

But we must keep this for the next outing.

The Early American Giant.

A DISCOVERY was recently made in Kentucky of three unusually fine skeletons. A Louisville paper asserts that two men undertook to explore a cave which they accidentally discovered not far from that city. The entrance to the cave was small, but the explorers soon found themselves in a magnificent apartment, richly furnished with the most expensive and fashionable stalactites. In a corner of this hall stood a large stone family vault, which the two men promptly prized open. In it were found three skeletons, each nearly nine feet in height. The skeletons appear to have somewhat frightened the young men, for on seeing so extensive a collection of bones they immediately dropped their torch, and subsequently wandered in darkness for thirty-six hours before they found their way back to daylight and soda-water.

Now, it is evident (says the *New York Times*) that these gigantic skeletons belonged to men very different from the men of the present day. A skeleton eight feet and ten inches in height would measure fully nine feet when dressed in even a thin suit of flesh. The tallest nine-foot giant of a travelling circus is rarely more than six feet four inches high in private life and without his boots, and even giants of this quality are scarce and dear. The three genuine nine-foot men of Kentucky must have belonged to a race that is now entirely extinct, and hence it would be a matter of very great interest if we could learn who and what they were.

It would be difficult to excuse the indifference of these giants to our rational curiosity. They could afford to be buried in a gorgeous family vault, and hence could have easily afforded to decorate the vault with a plain and inexpensive door plate. They could afford to pay the cost of having their heavy bodies carried a long distance into the cave before they were deposited in the vault, and it is reasonably certain that they did not obtain possession of so eligible a burial-place without paying a large price to the local cemetery company. And yet they did not take the trouble to furnish us with the slightest clue to their identity. Not only did they omit to put a door plate on their vault, but they failed to deposit a visiting card, or a worthless certificate of petroleum stock, or anything whatever bearing the name of either of them, in the tomb. Not so much as a boot or a paper collar, a gilt sleeve button, or a cheap jack-knife, was buried with them.

When we contrast this selfish parsimony with the generous forethought of the cave-dweller who died with a bear's skull in one hand, a rhinoceros's horn in the other, and with his pockets stuffed full of engraved tooth-brush handles, merely in order to please remote posterity, we can only blush for the selfish want of public spirit of the early American giant.

Pen Painting.

WHAT a delicious verandah is this to dream in! Through the tangled passion-flowers, jessamines, and magnolias, what a soft gleam of bright, hazy distance, over the plains and far away! The deep river-glen cleaves the table-land, which here and there swells into breezy downs. Beyond, miles away to the north, is a great forest barrier, above which there is a blaze of late snow, sending strange light aloft into the burning haze. All this is seen through an arch in the dark mass of verdure which clothes the trellis-work, only broken through in this one place, as though to make a frame for the picture.

He leans back, and gives himself up to watching trifles.

See here! A magpie comes furtively out of the house, with a key in his mouth, and seeing Sam, stops to consider if he is likely to betray him. On the whole, he thinks not; so he hides the key in a crevice, and whistles a tune.

Now enters a cockatoo, waddling along comfortably, and talking to himself. He tries to enter into conversation with the magpie, who, however cuts him dead, and walks off to look at the prospect. Flop! flop! A great, foolish-looking kangaroo comes through the house and peers round him. The cockatoo addresses a few remarks to him, which he takes no notice of, but goes blundering out into the garden, right over the contemplative magpie, who gives him two or three indignant pecks on his clumsy feet, and sends him flying down the gravel walk. Two bright-eyed little kangaroo rats come out of their box, peering and blinking. The cockatoo finds an audience in them; for they sit listening to him, now and then catching a flea, or rubbing the backs of their heads with their fore-paws. But a buck possum, who stealthily descends by a pillar from unknown realms of mischief on the top of the house, evidently discredits cockey's stories, and departs down the garden to see if he can find something to eat. An old cat comes up the garden walk, accompanied by a wicked kitten, who ambushes round the corner of the flower-bed, and pounces out on her mother, knocking her down, and severely maltreating her. But the old lady picks herself up without a murmur, and comes into the verandah, followed by her unnatural offspring, ready for any mischief.

The kangaroo rats retire into their box, and the cockatoo, rather nervous, lays herself out to be agreeable. But the puppy, born under an unlucky star, who has been watching all these things from behind his mother, thinks at last, "Here is some one to play with;" so he comes staggering forth, and challenges the kitten to a lark. She receives him with every symptom of disgust and abhorrence; but he, regardless of all spitting and tail-swelling, rolls her over, spurring and swearing, and makes believe he will worry her to death. Her scratching and biting tell but little on his woolly hide, and he seems to have the best of it out and out, till a new ally appears unexpectedly, and quite turns the tables. The magpie hops up, ranges alongside of the combatants, and catches the puppy such a dig over the tail as sends him howling to his mother with a flea in his ear.—*Henry Kingsley.*

Wanderings in Half-a-Guinea.

BY MAJOR MONK-LAUSEN.

CHAPTER XVIII.—THE ATTACK.

THE idea which had occurred to me was this.

One of the industries of the natives which had interested and surprised me was the preparation of glycerine from palm oil, which was carried on to an extent, and with a knowledge of the conditions under which it can best be collected, astonishing in a people so little acquainted with the discoveries of civilization.

They used the substance universally and freely for the lubrication of their bodies; and, in addition to the suppleness which this gave to the limbs, it proved a perfect protection against the attacks of mosquitoes, as I had found to my great comfort. For, shortly after falling in with the Kreps, I had given the nostrum a fair trial, rubbing it all over me morning and evening, and since that time had enjoyed perfect immunity from the bites of all stinging insects.

Any amount of the substance was therefore at hand, and I had amongst my baggage a good store of nitric and sulphuric acids. Going to the hut where my goods were housed, I obtained these materials, and set to work at the preparation of NITRO-GLYCERINE.

When I had collected a sufficient quantity of this powerful explosive, I placed it in two small clay jars, of native workmanship, and leaving the village, proceeded towards the scene of the late scorpion fight. The sun was near the horizon, and, as daylight was needful for my preparations, I was only just in time.

Atah had done his work very well. I found the hole he had dug, placed one of the jars of nitro-glycerine in it, fitted a cartridge of powder in the neck of this, and brought the end of the wire into communication with the cartridge. Then I carefully covered all up with stones and boughs, and hastened with the other jar to the palm clump on the left; where, finding that Tulu had executed his instructions with equal precision, I repeated the process described, and returned to my redoubt, which was now quite completed, and found that the wires had been conducted to it as ordered.

I arranged them, together with the little electrical apparatus, in a corner, where they would be at the same time handy and out of the way of injury; and proceeded on a tour of inspection along the lines.

It was now quite dark; but the trenches seemed to be satisfactorily completed, and after ordering fires to be lit as usual, that the enemy, who were doubtless on the watch in the outskirts of the forest, might not perceive any signs of suspicion, I called the men of the village around me, and appointed them to their respective posts.

I stationed those who had firearms at regular intervals along the line of trenches. These extended for three hundred yards, which was in the proportion of one gun to every fifteen yards; but they were somewhat closer than that, as I planted none within forty yards of the redoubt on either side, feeling certain that that point in the defences would not be chosen for close attack—at any rate, before the rest was carried. The spaces between the musketeers were filled by those armed only with spears, and bows and arrows; and I pointed out to them that, though they could put no trust in their archery in the open, it would not be

ineffective if they waited till the gunner next them fired and then let fly their arrows into the smoke and confusion; for the attacking party would then find it impossible to dodge, let them be as active as they liked. At the same time, I pointed out to those with firearms that the archery of their friends could only be useful at close quarters, and urged them to reserve their fire till their enemies were within stone's-throw.

Of course they promised faithfully, but I was too old a soldier to have much confidence in their keeping their word.

I then advised all arms not to pass the night in their huts, but to lie down at their respective posts, so as to be ready at a moment's notice. With the posting of sentries I did not interfere, as the ordinary routine was quite efficient, and they kept their own roster. Besides, I had no fear of a night surprise, as my own people told me that such a thing was never attempted. The Alfoers believe that a peculiar curse, all the more dreadful for being vague, clings to any one who kills his friend or comrade by misadventure, even in the confusion of battle; hence their abhorrence of a mode of attack in which it is impossible to guard against such accidents.

When I had thus accomplished everything in my power for the defence of the village, with the fate of which my own fortunes had become so curiously mixed, I retired to my redoubt, where all was now in prime order, and lay down under my tent, which my fellows had pitched for me within the enclosure, to snatch a few hours' sleep—which, indeed, I needed; for I think every one will own that I had done a good day's work.

When the first streaks of light appeared in the east, I was roused, according to order, and the mists of sleep were at once dissipated by the thought of the serious business before us. It was at my instigation that all these poor people were standing their ground instead of seeking refuge in flight, and the responsibility thus incurred was great. For the numerical odds seemed almost overwhelming now the moment for action had arrived; and I confess that I felt unusually grave and anxious as I watched the growing light, and objects around became more and more distinct.

Let me endeavour, in a few words, to explain the position clearly. In our rear was a river, about the breadth of the Thames at Richmond, which made a sharp bend; close to the bank, and in the hollow of the elbow, the group of huts; on the land side of these the entrenchment, breast high, drawn on each flank in an oblique line from the river, and meeting at the hillock, which had been converted into a redoubt. In front, a plain half a mile wide, half a mile deep, fringed with forest. In the centre of this open ground, a small marsh; on the right, a little hill, with some felled timber; on the left, a clump of palm trees.

As the light increased, I could distinguish the natives in the trenches peering over the parapet. They were in the positions I had assigned them—ten of those armed with guns on each side of the redoubt, at equal intervals, and supported by the spearmen and archers. The redoubt was strongly garrisoned. My six Alfoers, with muskets which were certain to go off, looked more than confident; for there was a grin upon every countenance, as each thought of the unexpected reception prepared for the hated Kralls. Atah and Tulu had their double-bar-

relled guns; Peter Tromp his light fowling-piece, loaded with slugs. Protected by the earthwork, and armed as they were, they looked like holding the position against any number of such enemies as threatened us, if their ammunition only held out, and there was a good supply.

On the broad parapet before me lay my battery. The double rifle, the single small-bore, and Cruiser, the large elephant gun, charged with ten drachms of powder and a handful of pistol bullets.

The paramount advantage of my elevated position was that it enfiladed the whole line of defence, every part of which was within such easy range that it was impossible for me to miss. Thus I could afford immediate assistance at any point which was hard pressed.

It was true that I could not thus fire at close quarters without exposing myself to the shot of the enemy; but one must risk something. The reader will have discovered before this that, though a modest, I am by no means a timid man.

The light of dawn grew stronger every second, and soon I could clearly distinguish the trees in front. The hostile Kralls did not keep us long in suspense: dark figures issued presently from the wood on the right, and then, as if that were a signal to other attacking parties, there was a similar movement on the left, and in a few minutes the two bodies, one on each side of the marsh, were advancing across the open ground silently, and in much better order than I had anticipated. The men with firearms formed a first line, and came on extended, with intervals of about six paces between the files. The remainder followed in closer order.

In this formation both wings converged, approaching each other as they neared the village.

When the party on my right had got some hundred yards clear of the cover, I took up my small-bore, cocked it, pressed down the cap, aimed carefully at a man in the front line, and pressed the trigger. The report rang out sharp and clear in the morning air, and a dark figure lay on the plain.

Rapidly reloading, I next tried a long shot at the body coming from the left; and again the bullet found its billet.

What a strange and fearful mystery is the innate desire of all sentient beings to kill something! Man, indeed, in his civilized state, endeavours to repress, or at least to regulate, this natural tendency; but it is too strong for him, and while he remains a carnivorous animal will probably continue to be so.

The first step towards eradicating this evil principle of cruelty is to habituate him to regard with a certain horror the slaughter of his fellow-men, because, as he strongly objects to the loss of his own life, he can be more easily taught that it is wrong to inflict that injury on beings exactly like himself.

All laws, both religious and secular, have endeavoured to protect human life; and the crime of murder has been denounced in every society, ancient or modern, possessing the slightest claims to be considered emerging from barbarism. And yet the love of sport is as strong now as it was in the days of Nimrod; and war, which is the most exciting description of sport, has lost none of its fascination. Give him the valid excuse of defending his own life, or the in-

terests of his country—satisfy his conscience, that is, that he may take the lives of his fellow-creatures without infringing the laws of God or society, and the civilized man will feel as stern a joy in the slaughter of his enemies as does the veriest savage.

I am not deficient, I hope, in humanity; and yet it gave me an indescribable thrill of pleasure to see those figures lie motionless. These Kralls had the intention of robbing and murdering me, and I was therefore justified in regarding them in the light of moolahs and crocodiles; so I gloried in each successful shot, and desired ardently to make a good bag.

And yet I admired them for their pluck. One would have imagined that the fact of a shot at such a distance would have staggered men who had no experience of conical bullets, and, moreover, expected to catch their victims napping. But, no; there was a slight pause on each occasion, and a gathering round the victim, but no sign of hesitation. On they came.

I was in good form that morning, and with ten successive shots I dropped as many Kralls, five of each company, before they reached the point in front of the marsh where they met.

They were now within three hundred yards, and I took my double-barrel.

"What shooting!" exclaimed Peter Tromp, as he took the small-bore from my hand, and commenced loading it. "You go on firing, milor, and I will load for you."

By this arrangement, and shooting steadily and somewhat slowly, I always had a barrel with a bullet in it, and the enemy a man falling at regular intervals. In five minutes my list of victims had reached a score.

By that time we were within range of the Brummagem muskets, and balls began to whistle about our ears. My eight men returned their fire, though Peter confined himself to loading the piece which I had just discharged. By adhering to this task he did more good than he would have done by the use of his own weapon, and he also avoided the danger of exposing his head above the parapet.

I was grateful to him. Had those culinary brains been scattered by a savage bullet, it would indeed have been a loss.

The Kreps in the trenches likewise now opened fire, not altogether without effect, and there was quite a respectable little combat going on.

Atah and Tulu were not only excellent shots themselves, but each took pains to see that the three men under his command fired coolly and steadily. For whatever intention the Krep lads in my service may have had of repudiating it when rejoined to their friends—an intention of which I have no evidence; I only judge by what I should have done myself in their position—they showed no symptoms of it in front of the enemy. Directly the preparations commenced, they repaired to Atah and Tulu for orders, quite as a matter of course, just as they had done on the line of march. And now they delighted me with the result of the training I had given them.

The fire from the redoubt, then, was very deadly, and it was no discredit to the courage of the Kralls that they should shrink away from the centre of the entrenchment, and press their attack on the flanks. In every part, however, my bullets, at least, could reach them. More than once, indeed, I got two of them in

a line, and one ball passed through the bodies of both.

But though the ground in front of our lines was now thickly strewn with dead and wounded, they refused to retire. When a man with a musket fell, one of the others caught up his weapon and ammunition, and took his place in the attack; while those who had only bows shot their missiles into the air, so as to fall perpendicularly into the redoubt, thereby causing its little garrison considerable annoyance. I think all of us were slightly wounded; poor Peter Tromp was seriously so. As he squatted on the ground, loading my small-bore for me, two arrows dropped simultaneously on him, one on each forearm, which it pierced completely, and then entered the leg, so that his arms were nailed to his thighs; and, as the points were barbed, he could not release himself.

Happily, however, the Poopooans never poisoned their arrows.

We viewed such small and shifting marks as we fired over the broad parapet, that it required luck as well as good shooting to hit us with their inferior guns; and that luck was not theirs.

They were determined fellows. A regular carnage had been going on in their ranks for full ten minutes, and yet they did not draw off as I had anticipated—only edged away from the neighbourhood of the redoubt.

No doubt they thought that if they could only break through the entrenchment, and take the redoubt in rear, they would find it open and defenceless; but the Kreps held their lines with great spirit, and, aided by my enfilading fire, stalled off several determined attacks.

CHAPTER XIX.—THE MINES ARE SPRUNG.

I WAS about to fire at a group of the troublesome archers, when Atah laid his hand upon my arm, and directed my attention to a rush which was being made at a point in the entrenchment on the right flank. The Kralls, who were massed here in a crowd, were in the act of swarming over the earthworks, and a hand-to-hand fight with spears was going on, which must necessarily overpower the defending Kreps, outnumbered as they were.

"The women in the huts!" he cried, much excited. "Piti is in the one just there. May I go?"

"No, Atah; stay where you are," I replied.

And, as I spoke, I knocked over two of the leading Kralls. Then, catching up Cruiser, I poured the heavy charge it contained into the thick of them.

The recoil nearly knocked me backwards; but the effect produced upon the group which had forced the line of defence was so great that they were thrown into complete confusion, and the Kreps, rallying at the sight, had no difficulty in bearing them back with loss.

This last failure disheartened the enemy, and they drew off, leaving the plain in the front of our position strewn with the dead and dying. But they still maintained some order, since they bore those who were slightly hurt with them; and on reaching the marsh, they again separated to the right and left, each original party, or what was left of it, keeping together.

They must have lost fully a hundred men, or a quarter of their number, where they expected but very slight (if any) resistance. And yet they evidently had not relinquished all idea of renewing the attack; for, instead of regaining the woods, they retired no farther

than the first patches of cover, where they could rally and consult, protected from my fire. For I still continued to pick off individuals as fast as my double and single rifles could be loaded.

The two places where they halted and gathered were, of course, the hillock on the right and the palm clump on the left.

The spots which were mined.

When they had gathered together under cover, I turned my attention to poor Peter Tromp, whose cries of pain were distressing; but it was the first free moment I had had. Laying my hand on his forehead, I told him to sleep, which he did instantly. Then, with a sharp penknife, I cut out the arrows from his thighs, and, removing the heads, drew them out of his arms. His wounds bled prodigiously; but Piti, who had come to the redoubt on the retreat of the enemy, to see how Atah was—the hussy said that it was a desire to serve me that brought her, but I knew better—bandaged them in very artistic style. Then I told Peter to wake, and he awoke, astonished to find his arms free and the pain subdued.

This operation had taken five minutes, the time I had determined to allow—the law I gave the enemy in case they liked to change their minds, and retire altogether.

But they remained in their temporary shelter.

I was excited, but still my heart beat quicker, and my feelings revolted from the duty I had undertaken—for to save these Kreps villagers, after persuading them to resist, was no less—as I straightened out the wire ends, and established a communication with the electric battery.

A spark—a concussion in the air—a trembling in the ground under the feet!

Simultaneously, from two spots in the plain before us, earth, stones, trees, heads, limbs, bodies, were whirled into the air, to descend again like a pyrotechnical *bouquet*. Some of the *débris* even fell within our lines; and in connection with this a curious incident occurred, as interesting to the physiologist as it might have proved startling to a person of weak nerves.

A head alighted, right side up, so that it rested on what remained of the neck upon the parapet before me; and I could see, beyond a possibility of doubt, that it was alive and sentient. The eyes, which were open, had speculation in them; the features twitched. It resembled a diabolic, wingless cherub—a very diabolic cherub certainly, for a more morose expression of countenance I think I never beheld. Perhaps amiability could hardly be expected under the circumstances.

"Wow!" cried Piti, who had just finished dressing an arrow wound of Booboo's. "I know the face. It is the head of Krakrane, the chief of the Kralls."

"Piti says truly—it is Krakrane," echoed Tata and Squeely.

The head heard its name pronounced, and turned its eyes in the direction of the speakers. It also recognized me as an enemy, for on investigating it more closely it jerked convulsively forwards, and tried to bite me. The teeth catching in my sleeve, it rolled off the parapet, and hung at the extent of my arm, till death relaxed the jaws, and it dropped to the ground.

No one can say that the Krall chieftain did not die game.

No further attack was to be feared. So many of the

enemy had been blown to pieces at the same time as their chief, that the small remainder only thought of escape; and we could see them making for the woods singly, here and there, fast as startled rabbits.

Alarmed by the explosions, which they took for the warning shocks of an earthquake, the Krep women and children streamed out of the huts, and joined the men, who were gathered, silent and awe-struck, in front of the entrenchment.

When I came down from the redoubt, followed by Atah, Tulu, and the rest, the whole crowd prostrated themselves in the dust, rubbing their foreheads on the ground with such energy that they seemed trying to burrow under it.

After I had repeatedly told them to get up, they at last obeyed so far as to rise to their knees, in which attitude I made them a little speech, improving the occasion by pointing out that the present favourable position of affairs entirely arose from their doing as I told them. Whereupon a confused cry arose, to the effect that they would always do what I told them; and an old man, the same who had assumed the most prominent position amongst them on my first introduction, rose at last to his feet, came forward, and formally moved that I should take—the Throne!

Well, well—what he said amounted to that. He proposed that I should assume entire command of the Krep tribe, subdue or exterminate the Kralls, drive the Dutch away from the coast, and make myself master of Half-a-Guinea.

I replied that the other Krep villages must be consulted with regard to the very first step, but that we would see about it; and perhaps, if they behaved as well as they had done that morning, I would rule them for a short time, and make things tidy at any rate. In the meantime, I did not mind accepting the position of head man of the village, and, as my first act of authority, I would request them to divide themselves into four working parties, each with a responsible chief, to whom I might communicate my wishes.

They desired me to name these head men myself, supposing that I should choose them from amongst my immediate followers; but I told them no, for the present I intended to keep Atah, Tulu, and the six of their own tribe who had followed me from the first, as a body-guard, to attend me personally on all occasions. I might invest them with temporary authority to carry out particular instructions on occasions, but I desired to keep them free from any permanent office connected with the interior economy of the community.

While the election of the four—civic officers shall I call them?—was going on, I went over the field, which presented a sad spectacle, strewn as it was with dead and wounded; and the sight was the more solemn to me, that all those who lay prostrate a hundred yards and upwards from the entrenchment had fallen by my hand. The scene in the immediate neighbourhood of the places where the mines had been sprung I will not describe. It was not pleasant. The task of burial, however, would not be a hard one; for the force of the nitro-glycerine had excavated two holes which would amply serve for graves.

When the working parties were organized, I set some of them to pick up the wounded (who were but few in number, since I seldom fail to send my bullets through a vital spot, and those who fell close to the trenches

had been despatched long ago), and carry them carefully to the village, where the women who were most skilful at the business attended to their hurts. The remainder I employed in collecting the dead bodies which were whole, and picking up the fragments of those who had been blown to bits, and conveying all to the two holes, which I then ordered to be filled in.

I do not know whether the people thought it most extraordinary that the dead should be buried instead of being left to the vultures, wild beasts, and ants; or that the wounded should not be knocked on the head. I fear that some of the latter were put out of their pain on the sly, when I was not looking.

Of the Krepes themselves, five had been killed outright, and ten severely wounded. Of hurts which did not incapacitate I took no count, but they were pretty numerous. Poor Peter Tromp could not stand, and suffered a good deal of pain; but he had received no lasting damage, and soon got better.

On going to the hut to which he had been carried, to learn how he was getting on after all was over, I saw a man sitting on the ground in the middle of the village, quite motionless; and, going up to inquire what was the matter, I found that he was fast asleep, and recognized the Krall spy from whom I had extracted the information of the impending attack the day before. He was still in the mesmeric trance.

With a few passes I woke him up. Then I called Tulu, and told him to take the man to the edge of the wood, and advise him to escape as fast as he could—an injunction which Tulu afterwards reported that he had obeyed without hesitation or questioning.

How astonished the poor fellow must have been when he fell in with other stragglers of his tribe, and learned the extraordinary events which had happened—the attack, and the explosions, through all of which he had slept so soundly! That he had been left unscathed for all that time was a source of satisfaction to me, because it showed how much impression my little arts had made upon the unsophisticated minds of the villagers. While he was under the influence of the charm which I had put upon him, he was sacred in their eyes. That he should be set free after all, made them open their eyes to their fullest extent; but all my actions were so unaccountable that they soon ceased even to question my people.

I really think that they believed me to be a superior and supernatural being at that time. They certainly obeyed my injunctions most readily, even to tending their wounded enemies with care and humanity. I was therefore surprised, on going round the hospital huts some days after the fight, and examining the hurt of a Krall who had received one of my bullets through the neck, but was going on nicely, when the patient suddenly snatched my knife from my belt, stabbed himself to the heart, and fell back with a triumphant smile. And then, making inquiries through Atah and the rest, I found that the poor crippled wretches thought to a man that they were being reserved for a grand orgie of torment, and that their nurses entertained the same belief.

So I had to commence my rule by instilling into their minds that elementary law of chivalry once so well recognized in England, but now, alas! dying apparently out of the code of British thought—"Never hit a fellow when he is down."

The Fruit of Eve.

STRAWBERRIES, raspberries, cherries, mulberries, peaches, plums, pears, and grapes—even grapes, the most poetic of fruits—might all better be spared than the honest, sound, ruddy apple. They are the delight of an hour—the evanescent decoration of a week, or a fortnight, or of a month. They play exquisitely into each other's hands, and wreath the summer with continuous variety and delicate luxuries. But the apple is a permanent pleasure. It is for all the year. It circles the months. You may eat russets up to the day when the new apples appear. The apple is immortal! As it is the most ancient, so it is the most royal of fruits.

The apple never dies. It is the most generous, constant, and unselfish of the fruits. All through the latitudes where it can live at all, it gives itself impartially and profusely; and everywhere it is a symbol. In the apple latitudes men are of a mingled, temperate character, neither too sharp nor too sweet. They are of firm consistency, and sound to the core. They are a wholesome, hearty, sturdy, and trusty race. In the grape latitudes, the wine countries, they have rare and exquisite qualities, but the first gush is the best, and they are not sweet to the very seed. In the banana and pomegranate latitudes there is a little spirit, no flavour, and an insipid, mushy consistency.

Grapes shrivel into raisins, which may be packed in boxes like slaves in a slave ship; but apples, even in a barrel, preserve their individuality and elbow-room, and touch but at few points, and they nobly endure. If you choose to slice and dry them—it is not their natural end—but even then they will return you good for evil in pies that might persuade any pagan to be a Christian. Not doughy, clammy, fatty pies, which are a device of Satan, but those triumphs which have no bottom crust, and in which the spoon sinks and sinks—Selah!

For pies proper no condemnation can be severe enough. It is one of the alarming signs that we are getting to be a pie-eating nation. Pies are the staple food at all the taverns in the land. The rural kitchen is full of pies. The railroad stations are piled with pies. It is the popular form of taking dyspepsia and getting out of health. It is a prostitution of any fruit, an injury, a crime, to bury it in a pie; but against the venerable and august apple it is a peculiar infamy.

Thus nothing is so improper as a pie proper. We call the apple venerable and august. "What else has descended to us from Eden but that and sin? Had there been any other fruit there in the blooming youth and glory of all fruits which could have persuaded Adam, the primal and perfect man, surely it would have been chosen. Why was not the luscious peach preferred, or the orange, or the Arabian date?

For the joy of tasting an apple, Adam made us all taste sin. For an apple he gave the world. And in the other heaven of the Greeks it was an apple that sowed discord, from the immortal jealousy of divinities that longed to possess it. Yet under what a plain, homespun coat it sometimes hides its perennial sweetness and exhaustless virtues!

Take diamonds and gold if you will, oh, Mother Nature, but spare us the generous apple!

The Egotist's Note-book.

ONE of the war correspondents gives the following description of the state of trade affairs in Sponz, one of the Slavonic towns:—"There are vendors of grocery offering to the passers-by dates, sugar, and twenty other articles for which I know no European names. Next door, a wretched-looking man, squatted on the earthen floor, is broidering a pacha's belt, or chasing the silver hilt of a sabre; and farther on, a squalid old man, with long, grey beard, and sunken, glassy eyes, crouching on the floor of his gloomy den, beside a smouldering wood fire, whose smoke has no exit, save by the complicated roof or doorway, is preparing coffee for his customers. His entire stock-in-trade is a stone mortar, in which he pounds his coffee with a short crow-bar; a square tin pot, closely resembling an empty biscuit box, and probably such formerly; a half-dozen cups of microscopic size; and a couple of yards of tattered bass matting, which serves as divan for the *habitués* of the establishment. There are bakers' shops, where the proprietor sits cross-legged among his loaves, his bare toes in alarming proximity to his goods; and one sees square little holes, where turbaned salesmen proffer for acceptance rolls of calico, bearing Manchester labels, and tin tobacco boxes manufactured by Bryant and May." No doubt a little more research would have shown people selling and using the celebrated willow pattern plate, with its charming design of the doves, the cucumbers, the Chinamen on the bridge, and the tree that bears the cannon balls.

Apropos of the imagination and optical illusion respecting the real practices of the Turks, here is an extract from an old journal, dated Nov. 3, 1834, just published in a daily paper:—"Close to Nisch, we passed an extraordinary monument of Turkish barbarity—a square tower faced with skulls of the Servians who fell in the insurrection when they established their independence. There are three other similar towers at the other three corners of the town. November 4.—Passed after dark the mouldering remains of one of a band of Servian robbers, impaled here by the Turkish Government—a long pole with a platform on the top, through which it passes, is the instrument of this barbarous mode of execution. When the operation is well performed, and care taken not to injure the entrails, life is said to remain as long as twenty-four hours." One thing is certain, that forty years of civilization have not improved the followers of Mahomet.

I have been rather amused, in glancing through Mark Twain's "New Pilgrim's Progress," published a few years ago, to read some of his opinions on the Turks, and to see how thoroughly the writer then ventilated the very ideas that have been so prevalent in discussion during the past few weeks. He says of the Syrians:—

"If ever an oppressed race existed, it is this one we see fettered around us, under the inhuman tyranny of the Ottoman Empire. I wish Europe would let Russia annihilate Turkey a little—not much, but enough to make it difficult to find the place again without a diving rod or a diving bell. The Syrians are very poor, and yet they are ground down by a system of taxation

that would drive any other nation frantic. Last year their taxes were heavy enough, in all conscience; but this year they have been increased by the addition of taxes that were forgiven them in times of famine in former years. On top of this, the Government has levied a tax of one-tenth of the whole proceeds of the land. This is only half the story. The Pacha of a pachalic does not trouble himself with appointing tax collectors. He figures up what all these taxes ought to amount to in a certain district. Then he farms the collection out. He calls the rich men together; the highest bidder gets the speculation, pays the Pacha on the spot, and then sells out to smaller fry, who sell, in turn, to a piratical horde of still smaller fry. These latter compel the peasant to bring his little trifle of grain to the village at his own cost. It must be weighed, the various taxes set apart, and the remainder returned to the producer. But the collector delays this duty day after day, while the producer's family are perishing for bread; at last, the poor wretch, who cannot but understand the game, says, 'Take a quarter, take half, take two-thirds, if you will, and let me go!' It is a most outrageous state of things."

Farther on he says:—"We call at the mausoleum of the five thousand Christians who were massacred in Damascus in 1861 by the Turks. They say those narrow streets ran blood for several days, and that men, women, and children were butchered indiscriminately, and left to rot by hundreds all through the Christian quarter; they say, further, that the stench was dreadful. All the Christians who could get away fled from the city, and the Mohammedans would not defile their hands by burying the 'infidel dogs.' The thirst for blood extended to the high lands of Hermon and Anti-Lebanon, and in a short time twenty-five thousand more Christians were massacred, and their possessions laid waste. How they hate a Christian in Damascus!—and pretty much all over Turkeydom as well. And how they will pay for it when Russia turns her guns upon them again. It is soothing to the heart to abuse England and France for interposing to save the Ottoman Empire from the destruction it has so richly deserved for a thousand years. It hurts my vanity to see these Pagans refuse to eat of food that has been cooked for us, or to eat from a dish we have eaten from, or to drink from a goatskin which we have polluted with our Christian lips, except by filtering the water through a rag which they put over the mouth of it, or through a sponge! I never disliked a Chinaman as I do these degraded Turks and Arabs, and when Russia is ready to war with them again, I hope England and France will not find it good breeding or good judgment to interfere."

The blowing up of Hell Gate, in New York harbour, of which full particulars have just reached this country, is certainly the most stupendous example of submarine mining on record. To fire at one given moment no less than 50,000 lbs. of that terrible explosive, dynamite, which had been plugged into a multitude of holes all round the sunken rock, so that the latter might be said, in culinary parlance, to have been "larded" with the plastic compound, and to do this by the simple pressure of a button, whereby an electric current was sent simultaneously along all the insulated wires

in connection with the charges, may be regarded as a wonderful trait of skilful engineering. A feat one hundred times more simple would, in the dark ages, have been looked upon as so much wizardry, having its origin in a region known as the "no canny."

Some people have a strange manner of giving vent to their disappointment. This is the way an indignant father does it in the first column of the *Times*:—

"On the 2nd inst., at 6, College Villas, Finchley New-road, the wife of C. Eardley Billing, of another daughter."

It would be cruel to ask how many little female Billings Mrs. B. had previously presented to her husband; but who can fathom the agony and anguish expressed by him in that simple word "another"?

I am glad to see that the Charity Organization Society has taken in hand the case of the Italian children who are kidnapped and brought over to this country in such large numbers. The local authorities ought to be empowered to inspect the wretched dens of infamy and vice into which these poor children are crowded at night by their brutal owners. The trade in these little white slaves must be very profitable. It is stated that a *padrone* recently deceased, who began life with a trained dog, and afterwards took to speculating in children, was worth not less than £20,000; whilst another *padrone*, who had deposited £20 with a magistrate as security that he would send two children back to Italy, readily forfeited the money, and carried the children off into the provinces, declaring that he should recoup himself in less than a fortnight.

There seems to have been a serious flood in the north, the river Irwell having overflowed its banks. The water forcing its way up an unfinished sewer, a landslip was the result. The report says, "The walls and rails of St. Simon's Church fell with the subsiding earth, and grave fears are entertained for the church itself, which is only a few yards away from the landslip." Of course this means graveyard, not grave fears, though even these latter are *apropos*.

"The short and simple annals of the poor" have received an interesting illustration at Woolwich within the last few days. At the last meeting of the board of guardians there, it was stated that amongst the inmates of the workhouse was a man who had in his possession a Post-office Savings' Bank book, with £64 10s. 3d. placed to his credit, a box with four £5 notes in it, £3 7s. in gold and silver, and other securities, worth altogether £90. This poor inmate was also in receipt of a pension of three shillings a week from a Foresters' club, with a prospect of £12 being paid to his relatives at death. The guardians were hard-hearted enough to appropriate the money found on the indigent inmate, to pay for his maintenance, the said indigent inmate protesting loudly against such an act of injustice, and complaining bitterly of the cruelty and tyranny to which the poor are subjected!

Dr. Johnson used to affirm that there was nothing so exhilarating—next to taking a walk down Fleet-street, of course—as travelling in a postchaise and four; but then the burly lexicographer knew nothing of Pullman cars and the "Flying Dutchman." A correspond-

ent, however, writes to the *Times* to say that, wanting a change for a holiday, he took his wife, in a small phaeton drawn by two Welsh ponies, and drove about England for a month, visiting all sorts of places, staying just where they liked, seeing a little rustic life, and enjoying themselves immensely. A groom in a pony cart attended to their luggage. The average cost of the trip, including the keep of the three ponies, was £1 15s. 6d. per day. Pleasure-seekers, weary of Paris and the Rhine, and who don't care for Yokohama and the Second Cataract, might do worse than go on a driving excursion amongst some of the pretty scenery of their native land.

Rude and irreverent jesters have often reproached the enthusiastic followers of her Majesty's stagbounds with their pursuit of an animal strongly resembling a calf; but it has been reserved for the devotees of *Le Sport* across the Channel to discover and take advantage of the capabilities of an actual and veritable calf as a beast of the chase. The great discovery fell in this wise. It happened that in the department of the Jura a vagrant calf took to the woods, and persisted in preferring the greenwood tree to the tamer but more usual pleasures of the meadow and the byre. A sportsman of the neighbourhood at once saw his opportunity, struck a bargain with the owner of the truant (there is perhaps an unpleasant nineteenth century flavour about this last incident), and started with hound and horn to exterminate the calf. A chase of the most exciting character followed, and at length the novel quarry was "run into," despatched, and doubtless exhibited in triumph by torchlight.

These bicycle people seem to have acquired the knack of getting over the ground at a rate that would puzzle a horse. Here, at Lillie Bridge, the other day, Keen rode fifty miles in about seven minutes over three hours—this being at a rate of say sixteen miles an hour, kept up for three hours. One would like to have a horse to be depended upon for the distance, and ready to do it again. The speed is really marvellous; and yet there are people who declare bicycling to be in its infancy. Well, if the art improves during the next ten years' as rapidly as it has during the past five, great things may certainly be anticipated.

A case of alleged intimidation in the boot trade has been investigated by the Worship-street police magistrate, and the defendant was committed for trial, bail being accepted. Now, in a case like this, what shape does intimidation in the boot trade take—kicking?

Mr. Evans, in his pleasant book, "Through Bosnia and Herzegovina on Foot," gives the following capital word-painting of a storm:—"At last, on steering between the two rocky hills, whose barren masses rise, like twin pillars of Hercules, on either side of the mouth of this arm of the Narenta, a tremendous scene burst upon us. Just opposite to where the river widened into the sea, rose a small desolate island, a fit abode for nothing unless it were departed spirits of the evil. The rays of a pale, ominous sunset fell upon these cadaverous rocks, and flooded them with spectral light. On either side of the island the sea shone with abnormal emerald lustre; but what made the brilliance of the

foreground so unearthly was the unutterable darkness of all behind. The rocky island rose like a phantom against a sky as black as night. The question for us was whether there would be time enough to round the nose of rock to the left of the Narenta mouth, and cross a narrow arm of green sea to a promontory, where we might obtain shelter before the impending hurricane came down on us. The sailors thought it possible, and with set teeth laboured at the oars as for grim life. But the black pall of clouds that darkened the western hemisphere drew nearer and nearer; the white sea mews swept wildly and more wildly hither and thither against the face of the coming night, shrieking wildly, like the Banshees of coming doom. The wind and thunder roared louder in our ears, and a thin, snowy line of surf, stretching along the emerald horizon, swept like a charge of cavalry across the intervening fields of sea, but now so treacherously smooth, and bore down upon our little craft. The night was already upon us; the brilliant beams of sunset were suddenly transformed, first into darkness, and then into the lurid twilight of an eclipse, which lit up our men's faces with a pale, ashy grey, ghastly to look upon." This is a piece of word-colouring which could not be excelled by Mr. Black, who is famous for laying on tints with the lavish hand of a Turner or an elder Linnell.

Here are the sighs of so many sweet lovers, following one after the other at about five shillings an insertion, in the *Daily News*:—

A TALANTA.—Accept heartfelt thanks for loving letter, safely received. It is such a treat to hear from my own dearest.—With best love, and wearying till I see you, ever your own.

E.—I am all right, and hope you are well. Number two. —Yours, I.

PET to TINEY.—Meet me at the old place and the old time To-night or To-morrow Night.

One cannot help feeling glad that Atalanta's loving letter has been safely received, and that E. will know that I. is all right. As for Pet and Tiney, they have been going it terribly lately. We shall know all their secrets, and, if they don't mind, make one at "the old place." Ah, well, a bit of mystery is very sweet. What would life be without its romance and bosh? By the way, though, only the other day Atalanta was announcing that she had got very much sunburned. How it must add to her charming complexion! But suppose A. is a he!

THE season has arrived when every one is thinking of turning from the sultriness of town life to the pleasures of a country tour. Ladies who take very little exercise when at home, with true British courage often undertake long and tedious journeys. It is of the highest importance, under such circumstances, that the clothing should in no way impede the proper circulation of the blood, but especially should the old but bad practice of gartering the leg be avoided. Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London, has provided the only means of remedying this in his New Patent Stocking Suspender, which he will send by post for 2d. extra. The prices are—Children's, 1s. 6d.; maids', 2s.; ladies', 3s. Our advice is to write at once for a pair.

Crimes of the Past.

CATHERINE HAYES.

ON the 9th of May, 1726, Catherine Hayes was burnt alive at Tyburn for the murder of her husband. According to the *Calendar*, "When the wretched woman had finished her devotions, an iron chain was put around her body, with which she was fixed to a stake near the gallows. On these occasions, when women are burnt for petit-treason, it is customary to strangle them by means of a rope passed round the neck, and pulled by the executioner; so that they are dead before the flames reach the body. But this woman was literally burnt alive; for the executioner letting go the rope sooner than usual, the fire burnt fiercely around her, and the spectators beheld her pushing the faggots from her, while she rent the air with her cries and lamentations. Though other faggots were thrown on her, she survived amidst the flames for a considerable time, and her body was not perfectly reduced to ashes in less than three hours. This singular mode of her death became as much the subject of public conversation as her life had been; and many letters were published in the newspapers on the occasion. One party insisted that she had been thus executed in consequence of private orders from the people in power, founded on the shocking circumstances of aggravation which attended her crime; while other people contended that the sheriff had given orders that the law should be thus rigorously executed. A third party, however, insisted that neither of these was the fact; but that the flames reaching the hands of the executioner, he was compelled to let go the rope for his own safety; and indeed this seems the more probable opinion; for, enormous as her crime was, it is not customary in England to exert, but rather to abate, the full rigour of the law." Her two confederates, Billings and Wood, were sentenced to be hung in chains, but Wood died in prison of gaol fever before execution. The circumstances of the crime are in many respects very extraordinary, and are given in the *Calendar* at great length. Catherine Hayes, whose maiden name was Hall, was a young girl of more than doubtful character, in the service of a Mr. Hayes, a farmer in Warwickshire. She persuaded his son to marry her, and the two came up to London, where they kept a shop in Oxford-street. Billings and Wood were lodgers in the house, and Billings was believed to be a natural son of Mrs. Hayes. The household was a very unhappy one, and at last it was agreed between the three that Hayes should be murdered. Accordingly he was one night drugged, and, while still insensible, killed by heavy blows with a hatchet. The head was then severed from the body, and taken by Wood and Billings to Westminster, where it was thrown into Horseferry Dock. The body was dismembered, wrapped up in a blanket with some heavy stones, and thrown into a pond at Marylebone, somewhere near the present site of the Regent's Park. The very next morning a low tide left the dock dry, and a watchman saw Hayes's head lying in the mud. It was at once taken by him to the magistrates, by whose order it was publicly exposed on a pole in the churchyard of St. Margaret's, Westminster, immediately adjacent to the Abbey.

Here it was almost immediately recognised by some of Hayes's friends, one of whom, a Mr. Longmore, swore an information that to his belief Hayes had been murdered. Meantime, the blanket in the pond at Marylebone gave way, and some of the fragments of the body floated to the top. The pond was immediately dragged, and the whole of the body was discovered. Upon this a warrant was issued, and Mrs. Hayes was arrested at the shop in Oxford-street, where she was found with Wood and Billings. She persisted in her innocence to the last, but Wood and Billings at once made a full confession.

THEODORE GARDELLE.

Theodore Gardelle was a Swiss miniature painter, who lodged with a certain Mrs. King, in Leicester-square. On the 19th of February, 1761, as the two were alone in the house, a quarrel arose between them, and Mrs. King struck Gardelle on the face. He struck her back, and, according to his story, she fell and cut her head. She rose, however, and threatened his life, upon which a struggle ensued, and he finally killed her by driving the handle of an ivory comb into her throat. He then cut the body in pieces, hiding part of it in the cellar, part in the loft, and burning the rest on a fire in his own room. The linen and sheets he put to soak in a water tub, in the hope of soaking out the stains of blood; and he told Mrs. King's friends, when they came to inquire after her, that she had gone to Bath for a few days. Almost immediately afterwards a charwoman, whom Gardelle had called in to do some work, found the sheets in the water tub, and accordingly Sir John Fielding, on the ninth day after the murder, issued a warrant for his apprehension. Like Greenacre, Gardelle attempted to commit suicide on the night of his apprehension. A search of the house resulted in the immediate discovery of Mrs. King's remains, and on the 2nd of April Gardelle was convicted at the Old Bailey. "He was conveyed to the place of execution," Mr. Jackson tells us, "in a cart, which stopped a while near the spot where he committed the murder, and he was then hanged in the Haymarket, amidst an immense crowd of spectators, who testified their joy at his exit in a manner too turbulent for so solemn an occasion."

JAMES COOK.

On the 8th of August, 1832, James Cook pleaded guilty at Leicester to the murder of Mr. Paas, a commercial traveller, of High Holborn. Cook was a book-binder, with a workshop in a little court called Wellington-street, in the town of Leicester. One day in May, 1832, his neighbours observed an enormous fire in his place, and smelt a strong smell of burning flesh. Suspicion being excited, a constable was sent for, and an entrance forced, when Cook was found standing over the fire. They asked him what he was doing, and he said, "burning some horse-flesh which he had got for his dog, but which had gone bad." Upon this he was taken into custody, but released the same evening on his recognizances. Next morning he had absconded. On searching the premises, portions of a human body—the thighs and a part of one leg—were found thrust up the chimney. There were also discovered a saw, a hatchet, a couple of hammers, some fragments of clothing, and more especially a pencil and snuff-box, on which the name of Mr. Paas was engraved. On the 5th of June Cook was arrested at Liverpool, and he

almost immediately made a full confession. According to his story, Mr. Paas had called on him for an overdue account, and words ensued. From words they came to blows, and he struck Paas a blow on the head with an iron bar, which unfortunately killed him. Alarmed at this, he had dismembered the body with a hatchet, and burnt it bit by bit. At first he had been careful, and proceeded gradually; but at last he had made too large a fire, and the consequence was his discovery.

JAMES GREENACRE.

The trial and execution of James Greenacre for the murder of Hannah Brown took place early in 1837. Greenacre had been engaged to marry the woman, and, according to his own account, a quarrel took place between them, in the course of which he struck her a fatal blow. He then dismembered the body. The trunk he put in a sack with a quantity of shavings, and hid it in a disused shed near a turnpike in the Edgware-road. The head he wrapped up in a towel, and carried to Mile End Old Town, where he threw it into the Regent's Canal. The limbs he tied up in some sacking, and hid them in an osier bed near Coldharbour-lane, Camberwell. When the head was discovered, a friend of the murdered woman, who had been alarmed at her disappearance, went to see it, and recognised it at once. Another of her friends then recollected that she was to have been married to Greenacre. A warrant was accordingly taken out, and, on the evening of the 5th of April, Greenacre was arrested, the murder having been committed on the Christmas Eve of the year before. The same night he made an ineffectual attempt to hang himself in his cell, and the next day, being charged before the magistrates at Marylebone, he made a full confession, stoutly persisting, however, that he had never intended to kill the woman, and that he had cut up her body in a fit of terror, dreading that he should be found guilty of murdering her. He was executed in front of Newgate on the 2nd of May. There seems every reason to believe, from circumstances that afterwards came out, that his story was substantially correct, and that had he at once given himself up, he would, like Gardelle, have been probably found guilty only on the lesser charge of manslaughter. The trunk was discovered in the Edgware-road on the 6th of January, the eleventh day after the murder, the head on the 12th, and the limbs, which were very carefully hidden among the osiers, only a few days later. In many respects it may be perhaps noticed, the circumstances of this case closely resemble that of Catherine Hayes. In each case the remains were discovered almost immediately; in each case they were identified by the head; and in each case suspicion at once, and for obvious reasons, fell upon the guilty parties. Greenacre, when arrested, was found living in Lambeth with another woman, called Sarah Gale, who was put on her trial with him, and found guilty. Her sentence, however, was commuted to transportation for life, doubts being entertained as to how far she had really been accessory to the crime.

DANIEL GOOD.

On the 5th of April, 1842, the police discovered in the stable of Garnard Lodge, Roehampton, London, part of the body of a female. They were drawn to the place in consequence of a pawnbroker in Wandsworth

having charged the coachman Good with stealing a pair of trousers from his shop. Good evinced great concern when the officers entered the stable in search of the missing garment, and when their attention was directed to the fourth stall he suddenly rushed out, locked the door upon them, and fled. In that stall, beneath a little hay, they found an object which at first they could not recognise, but which turned out to be the trunk of a female, with the head and limbs cut off, the abdomen cut open, and the entrails extracted. The whole of the cuts through the flesh had been made with a sharp knife, but the bones were hacked with some blunt instrument. The stable door was at once burst open, the alarm given, and on further search a quantity of burnt bones, belonging to the body, was discovered in the fireplace of the harness-room. It was impossible to identify the remains, but from inquiries instantly set on foot there was no doubt they were those of a woman brought by Good or his wife to the lodge the preceding Sunday. At the inquest the jury found the body to be that of Jane Jones, or Good, and that Daniel Good had wilfully murdered her. Good eluded pursuit for nearly a fortnight, but was then discovered working as a bricklayer's labourer at Tunbridge, by a man who had formerly been in the police force at Wandsworth. He persisted in stating that his name was O'Connor, and that he knew nothing about the murder. On the 14th of May he was tried at the Central Criminal Court, before the Lord Chief Justice and Baron Alderson. His reputed wife, Mary Good, was also charged as being an accessory after the fact. They both pleaded not guilty. The trial of Daniel Good was proceeded with separately, and lasted till eight o'clock p.m., when the jury brought in a verdict of guilty. The Lord Chief Justice then passed sentence of death, after which Good made a rambling statement to the effect that a witness, Susan Butcher, produced on the trial, was the cause of the whole, the woman Jones having committed suicide in the stable, through jealousy of his connection with that person. The body, he said, was cut up and partially burned by a stranger, who offered to do it for a sovereign. He concluded his address—"Good night all, ladies and gentlemen; I have a great deal more to say but I am so bad I cannot say it." He was then removed. The woman, Mary Good, was acquitted.

"DONALD," said a Scotch dame, looking up from the Catechism to her son, "what's a slander?" "A slander, gude mither?" quoth young Donald, twisting the corner of his plaid; "a-weel, I hardly ken, unless it be, mayhap, an ower true tale which one gude woman tells of anither."

CHAPPED HANDS.—Chapped hands may be in part prevented by carefully and thoroughly drying the skin after washing; and when they occur, can be quickly cured by rubbing the hands over with lemon juice. When the chaps have been neglected, and suffered to become large, this remedy causes considerable smarting for a few moments; if, however, as soon as the skin of the hands begins to get rough, a cut lemon is rubbed over them after washing, it does not cause pain, but produces a pleasant softness of the skin, and keeps off the evil. If this application is objected to, the following lotion may be used twice a day:—Borax, two scruples; glycerine, half an ounce; water, seven ounces.

Our Relative Abroad.

I WAS returning to England from Bombay in the month of January, 1860, with a portion of my regiment, on board the *Thunderer*, which I was agreeably surprised to find commanded by my old friend, Captain Ellaby. As we had to stay some days at Sierra Leone, I decided to go on shore with him, and spend a few days in hunting antelopes. We took on shore with us our servants, our arms, and a few camping necessities. We had just disembarked, and were going to mount the horses which were provided for us, when a native, hearing that we were on a hunting expedition, told us that traces of some large, savage apes, called gorillas, had been seen only the day before, and they were still supposed to be in the woods, about a day's journey from the town—that is, about five-and-twenty miles. My old friend, the captain, immediately sent to the first lieutenant of the *Thunderer* for twenty armed men, who soon joined us, accompanied by Dr. Grant, our surgeon, attracted by the chance of seeing and forming an opinion on these animals. We set off at once with the negro, and reaching a village called Jafnoo before the heat became too oppressive to continue our journey, we stayed there until five o'clock, when we again set out, and reached Geba, near the haunts of the gorillas, between nine and ten in the evening. There we engaged four natives; and a little beyond, at the edge of a forest, pitched our tent for the night, lighting fires and posting sentinels. At break of day, one of the sailors informed us that he had seen large, indistinct forms climbing about the trees. He thought they must be monkeys, attracted to our fires by curiosity. We could make out nothing; but the alarm had been given, and, after a short consultation, we started in pursuit.

The blacks went first, three of them armed with bows and arrows; but the man we had brought from Sierra Leone, and the four engaged at Geba, carried guns. The captain was armed with two revolvers and an excellent carbine, while I was similarly fitted out, we two being on horseback. The doctor had a double-barrelled gun and a revolver. Our servants followed, with the baggage horses; and lastly came the sailors, with their guns and bayonets. In this order we advanced towards the forest, over a space of sandy ground, strewn with great white rocks, which glittered in the sun, now just risen. In half an hour we reached some marshy ground, where our guides found and showed us the traces of monkeys, proving that the sailor had been right. Poor fellow, that was the last dawn he ever saw!

We dismounted here, and, leaving our horses with one of the sailors and the negro from Sierra Leone, we followed the footprints, which were terribly large. For about a quarter of an hour the ground grew more and more swampy, and we soon found ourselves under some large trees, growing in a bog, as they may be seen in the outskirts of many of the great African forests. The scene was most interesting from an artistic point of view, but to us it was only vexatious; for our progress was rendered exceedingly difficult, by our constantly sinking into the mud, which was lightly covered with grass and bog moss, and we were frequently obliged to save ourselves by clinging to the trunks of the trees.

After about two hours of this slow travelling, we

came to somewhat firmer ground; and about seven o'clock we entered a forest of enormous trees. We here advanced much more rapidly, though cautiously; when all at once the negroes stopped, and pointed out to us an open space, which we could make out by stooping so as to look under the low boughs. We could see nothing stir, however; but we heard a loud roaring noise, and a sound as of some large animal forcing its way through the trees. We thought at first of separating into two parties—the captain to lead one, and I the other; but after a short consultation, we decided to keep together, not knowing what we might come across.

On emerging, after a few minutes, into the clearing which we had before seen, the captain, the doctor, and myself all heard a terrible cry close behind us. One of the sailors had fallen, killed instantaneously by an enormous branch of a tree, which had been thrown at him, and had fallen on his head.

We turned round, and saw, fifteen or twenty feet above our heads, a hideous beast, having something of the appearance of a man, but with a horribly savage countenance, which was tearing off pieces of wood and bark, and hurling them at us, one after the other, with inconceivable rapidity. We all fired immediately; but, unhappily, one of the missiles hurled by the ape struck my arm at the instant, and my ball was consequently lost.

The others were not, though; for the beast uttered a fearful howl, and took to flight, springing from branch to branch, breaking the smaller trees under his weight, and tearing off the leaves by handfuls, while we followed him, guided by the traces of blood on the bark, on the ground, on the leaves; and, proceeding carefully, soon came within range. The captain called to me to fire, but on my replying that I could not see the animal, he fired his own piece. I heard a great commotion, and then we all cheered heartily; for the great ape lay motionless at the foot of an enormous ebony tree.

The captain, a prudent huntsman, shouted to his men not to go near the beast; but one of the men, disregarding his warning, darted forward and touched the creature with the butt-end of his gun. In an instant the ape was upon him, and tearing at his chest with his terrible claws. The man fell under the gorilla, almost dead. The animal stood up with difficulty on one leg—the other, as we afterwards found, being broken by the captain's shot—and faced us boldly. I never saw anything so ugly. He was positively frightful; his jaws chattered, and his great, dirty, yellow teeth were covered with blood and froth, his hair was bristling and wet with blood, his eyes seemed to threaten us, and a deep growl escaped him at intervals.

At this sight—taking no notice of the captain—three of the marines darted forward to the rescue of their companion; they discharged their pieces at the ape, and stabbed him at the same time with their bayonets; but the powerful animal seized one of their guns, and, holding it like a club, struck a fatal blow on the left ear of poor Stephen, our sentinel of the preceding night. Thus was another man killed by this savage brute.

The second sailor was thrown behind the trunk of the ebony tree, and the third sprang forward, leaving me a good view of the animal, at which I had not yet been able to fire without risk of hitting some of our party.

I now took a step forward, took careful aim, and fired, having the satisfaction of seeing the gorilla immediately fall dead; for my ball had struck him in the left eye, at which I had aimed.

I threw a branch on the body, while the captain and the doctor held themselves in readiness to fire if he stirred again; but there was no necessity, the beast was this time dead. Our success, though, was dearly bought.

The head, which measured twenty-three inches from the shoulders to the top of the skull, was preserved by the captain. The skin was so pierced and torn by the shots and bayonets that we were obliged to give up the idea of bringing it away. The state of the injured sailor necessitated our prompt return, for his left arm was broken, and one side was crushed. The doctor attended to his injuries first, and we then buried the other poor fellows immediately; after which the guides begged us to set out on our return, lest we should be attacked by a troop of the apes, which would be sure to come after us.

We did as they wished; but it was after ten o'clock before we were ready to start, and, after a very toilsome journey across the swamp, we arrived about half-past one at the spot where we had left the horses. In spite of the intense heat, we mounted immediately, and, taking the wounded man by turns, we travelled until three o'clock, when the horses were quite worn out; so that we had to stop and rest until sunset. In the evening, we managed to reach Geba, where we slept, and the following day we were back at Sierra Leone.

Mark Twain at Niagara.

NIAGARA FALLS is one of the finest structures in the world. I have been visiting this favourite watering-place recently for the first time, and was well pleased.

A gentleman who was with me said it was customary to be disappointed in the Falls, but that subsequent visits were sure to set that all right. He said it was so with him. He said that the first time he went, hack fares were so much higher than the Falls, that the Falls appeared insignificant. But that is all regulated now. I drank up most of the American Falls before I learned that the waters were not considered medicinal.

Why are people left in ignorance this way? I might have gone on and ruined a fine property merely for the want of a little information. And yet the sources of information are not meagre at Niagara Falls. You are something in doubt what you ought to do, but you are seldom in doubt concerning what you must do. If an infant can read, that infant is measurably safe in Niagara. In your room in the hotel, you will find your course marked out in the most convenient way by means of placards on the wall like these:—

"Pull the bell rope gently, but don't jerk." "Tie up your dog." "If you put your boots outside the door, they will be blacked; but the house will not be responsible for their return."

This is a confusing and tanglesome proposition, because it moves you to deliberate long and painfully as to whether it really be any object to you to have your boots blacked unless they are returned.

Outside the hotel, wherever you wander, you are intelligently assisted by the signs. You cannot come to grief as long as you are in your right mind, and so many instructions to keep track of. For instance:—

"Visitors will please notify the superintendent of any neglect on the part of *employés* to charge for commodities." (No inattention of this kind is observed.) "Don't throw stones down; there might be people below. The proprietors will not be responsible for parties who jump over the Falls." (More shirking of responsibility—it appears to be the prevailing thing here.)

A lady clerk in the shop told me, indeed, that all the grand array was made by the Indians, and there were plenty about the Falls, and that they were friendly, and that it would not be dangerous to speak to them.

I came upon a camp of them, gathered in the shade of a great tree, making wampum and mocassins, and addressed them in the following language of friendship:—

"Noble Red Men, brave Grand Sachems, War Chiefs, Squaws, and High-you-Nuck-a-Mucks, the paleface from the land of the setting sun greets you! You, Beneficent Polecat; you, Devourer of Mountains; you, Roaring Thundergust—the paleface from beyond the great waters greets you all! War and pestilence have thinned your ranks and destroyed your once proud position. Poker and seven-up and a vain modern expense for soap unknown to your glorious ancestors have depleted your purses. Appropriating in simplicity the property of others has gotten you into trouble. Misrepresenting facts in your sinless innocence has damaged your reputation with the soulless usurper. Trading with forty-rod whiskey to enable you to get drunk and happy and tomahawk your families has played the everlasting mischief with the picturesque pomp of your dress, and here you are in the broad light of the nineteenth century, gotten up like the rag-tag-and-bobtail of the purlieu of New York! For shame! Remember your ancestors! Recall their mighty deeds! Remember Uncas! and Red Jacket! and Hole-in-the-Day! and Horace Greeley! Emulate their achievements! Unfurl yourselves under my banner, noble savages, illustrious gutterships."

"Down with him!"

"Scalp the blaggard!"

"Hang him!"

"Drown him!"

It was the quickest operation that I ever saw. I simply saw a sudden flash in the air of clubs, brick-bats, fists, bead baskets, and mocassins; a single flash, and they all appeared to hit me at once, and no two of them in the same place.

In the next instant the entire tribe was upon me. They tore all the clothes off me; they broke all my arms and legs; they gave me a thump that dented the top of my head till it would hold coffee like a saucer, and then, to crown their disgraceful proceedings, and add insult to injury, they threw me over the Horseshoe Fall, and I got wet.

About ninety-nine or a hundred feet from the top the remains of my vest caught on a projecting rock, and I was almost drowned before I could get loose. I finally fell, and brought up in a world of foam at the foot of the Fall, whose celled and bubbly masses towered up several inches above my head.

Of course, I got into the eddy. I sailed round and round it forty-four times, chasing a chip, and gaining

on it—each round trip a half-mile—reaching the same bush on the bank forty-four times, and just exactly missing it by a hair's breadth each time.

At last a man walked down and sat down close to that bush, and put a pipe in his mouth, and lit a match, and followed me with one eye and kept the other on the match, while he sheltered it in his hands from the wind. Presently a puff of wind blew it out. The next time I swept around him he said—

"Got a match?"

"Yes—in my other vest. Help me out, please."

"Not for Joe."

When I came around again, I said—

"Excuse the seemingly impertinent curiosity of a drowning man, but will you explain this singular conduct of yours?"

"With pleasure. I am the coroner. Don't hurry on my account. I can wait for you. I wish I had a match."

"Take my place, and I'll go and get you one," I said.

He declined.

This lack of confidence on his part created a coolness between us, and from that time forward I avoided him. It was my idea, in case anything happened to me, to so time the occurrence as to throw my custom into the hands of the opposition coroner over on the American side.

At last a policeman came along and arrested me for disturbing the peace by yelling for help.

The judge fined me, but I had the advantage of him. My money was with my pantaloons, which were with the Indians. Thus I escaped.

I am now lying in a very critical condition. At least, I am lying any way—critical or not. I am hurt all over, but cannot tell the extent yet, because the doctor is not done taking the inventory. He will make out my manifest this evening. However, thus far he thinks only six of my wounds are fatal. I don't mind the others.

Whimsical Extracts from Wills.

FROM THE WILL OF GENERAL BLACKET, GOVERNOR OF PLYMOUTH, PROVED 1782.

"I DESIRE my body to be kept so long as it may not be offensive; and that one of my toes or fingers may be cut off to secure a certainty of my being dead. I further request my dear wife that, as she has been troubled with *one old fool*, she will not think of marrying a *second*."

FROM THE WILL OF THE REV. DR. APPLEBY, OF ST. BRIDE'S, PROVED 1783.

"I leave my body to be dressed in a flannel waistcoat, an old surtout coat, and breeches without lining and pockets; no shoes (*having done walking*), and a worsted wig, if one can be got, in order that I may rest comfortably."

FROM THE WILL OF A MARINER OF BRISTOL, PROVED 1795.

"My executors to pay, out of the first monies collected, to my beloved wife, if living, *one shilling*, which I give as a token of my love, that she may buy *hazel nuts*, as I know she is better pleased with cracking them than she is with *mending the holes in her stockings*."

Adele.

SCANT of stars is the shadowy sky,
That hangs so heavily over my head;
The midnight wind, as it stealeth by,
Is drowsily dirling a lullaby—
A cradle-song that is more like a sigh
To the baby Moon who has gone to bed.
Beloved, I'm leaning alone by the wall
Of this tall, defiant pier,
Striving to pluck from the waves that fall,
From waves that leap and waves that crawl
(Whose songs are shadow), two syllables clear:—
More musical they than a mermaid's call,
Heart whispereth listening Ear!—
Oh! drown not the name i' the dusk wave's swell,
Blunt not the syllables dear;
Hist to the music!—"Adèle! Adèle!"
Wind, whisper the word that I love so well;
Sing it, bold breakers that buffet the pier!

A blood-red light is before my face,
Along the beach there's a line of lamps;
The town is asleep, and I just can trace
Sleepy hulls in their anchoring-place;
Sleepy spars, with their rigging a-lace,
Stolidly loom through the harbour damps.
Mellower nights for a love-madrigal
Have been, I own; it is cold on the pier:
Yet, while the monotonous waves do fall,
While waves that leap and waves that crawl
Sing shadow songs, those syllables dear
Come sweeter to me than a mermaid's call—
Jewels of sound that cling to my ear!
Her name drowns not i' the dusk wave's swell;
Unblunted still are the syllables dear;
Hist to the music!—"Adèle! Adèle!"
Wind, whisper the word that I love so well;
Sing it, bold breakers that buffet the pier!

I leave the pier, and return to the town;
My smouldering fire I dreamingly stir;
I look—there's some hair of a deep, dark brown,
A pair of grey eyes that do so look down—
Rogues! charm they away my thought-fashioned frown—

I'm thrall'd by a beautiful vision of Her!
What, though the paper that covers my wall
Is anciently dim—is sullen and sere—
Her English comeliness halloweth all;
E'en when she cometh at memory's call
I'm palaced, my sweet! when I think thou'rt near!
Then, bless the one name that doth sweeter fall
Than any (meet gem for a knight-errant's ear);
Let it float on the surf of the tidal swell,
Or come like the cuckoo's note, mellow and clear—
Dear designation!—"Adèle! Adèle!"
Wind, whisper the word that I love so well;
Sing it, bold breakers that buffet the pier!

• BYRON WEBBER.

WHAT should we all do without the calendar when we want to put off a disagreeable duty? The admirable arrangements of the solar system, by which our time is measured, always supply us with a term before which it is hardly worth while to set about anything we are disinclined to.

About the Bank.

THERE is a wonderful fascination in lingering about Threadneedle-street and Bartholomew-lane on dividend days.

Every well-regulated mind must regard a Bank annuitant with unmixed satisfaction; and even to look on from a serene corner when these people come into the Bank garden, or totter up the steps towards the offices of the Reduced Threes or the Consols, should be a reaction calculated to suffuse the mind with a certain sense of calm.

One feels what must have been the youthful experience of the boy in the nursery story when he stood outside the coop of the goose which laid the golden eggs; for here is the great auriferous poultry-yard of British securities, and such of the golden eggs as are not left for future incubation are now ready to be distributed, and the scene in Threadneedle-street is becoming even more lively than usual.

In that shady-looking, quiet area, planted with trees, its stone steps looking like dwarf terraces, there is not wanting a sense of pastoral simplicity, as treated in the Watteau manner. Very still, and with cool shadows lingering here and there in its architectural nooks, this garden of the Bank leads with fitting solemnity to those offices where the twenty-five million golden eggs are ready for delivery, where auriferous and argentine bars are weighed in the mysterious bullion office, where the vaults lie in which Bank stock and deposits are preserved; to the lobby where hangs the portrait of Abraham Newland, the baker's shopman, who became the wealthy chief clerk; to the awful parlour where conversation must flow in truly Pactolean streams.

When the business of the Governor and Company was carried on in Grocers' Hall—that is to say, from 1694 to 1734—this central area was the churchyard of St. Christopher, in Threadneedle-street, and, indeed, remained as a churchyard until 1781, when the church itself was removed for the purpose of enlarging the Bank, which had been built upon the site of the house and garden of Sir John Houblon, the first Governor.

Once acquainted with the locality of this same garden, and knowing its former use, the solemn, quiet air which reigns there is explained. Churchyards retain some of their characteristics long after their uses have been changed, and, until the full roar and turmoil of life pass over them, seem to preserve strange lingering glooms, and a silence which leaves them like unruffled islands in the noisy outer sea. There are many such in London streets, shrinking back into queer, dusty old nooks, all built in, but haunted by solemn birds, and throwing long flickering shadows of ancient trees across the busy pathways.

To the fact of the old churchyard, perhaps, may be attributed the magnificent spectacle of the Bank beadle, who, gorgeous in an uniform which recalls ecclesiastical or almost pontifical splendours, is surely the very perfection of allofficial attire. In his own person he combines the best effects of royal, clerical, corporate, and magisterial beadedness; while, added to these, he inspires awe by his mysterious connection with capital, and a consciousness of daily connection with untold wealth.

The fortunate claimants of dividends are arriving fast, and carriages are driving up to the door. Elderly

gentlemen, ancient dames, comely matrons, well-jointed widows, alight with the assistance of the porters from all kinds of family conveyances of a sober, comfortable pattern, or from strange flies, which appear to have been unearthed from the frowzy yards of neglected livery stables, and are driven by wall-eyed men who appear to be without any look of speculation or of interest.

It is at the entrance in Bartholomew-lane that the British annuitants gather in force, and it is a strangely suggestive pastime for a man, who has no weight of money on his mind, to stand with his back against one of the pillars in the dingy lobby, and watch the company coming and going through the swinging doors. Marvellously spectral-looking people some of them—seen at no other time and at no other part of London, except, occasionally, at the Gresham morning lectures, or now and then in the reading-room of the London Institution; coming no one knows whence—going none know whither; dressed in costumes of no particular period, but compounded from past fashions of several.

Then there are faded, sordid people, with wrinkled brows and an unpleasant consciousness of pay-day on their lowering visages. Many of them are members of the same family, battered-looking men, about whose youth, if they were ever young, not a guess can be hazarded.

Here is a family party of four—a man and three sharp, although decrepit, women, one much older than the rest. They have clubbed together for a dingy fly with a broken-kneed horse, whose driver smells strongly of the stable, and leaves his customers to open the door for themselves. They all have dividends to receive; and as the elder woman totters forward, assisted but little by her kinsman's arm, the same thought occurs to each of her three companions, who cannot conceal the glance which estimates her chance of life, and reckons on the day when her share will be divided amongst survivors under the will.

Two things are remarkable in these ladies—their wistful, faded faces, so old and worn, and their strange propensity for garments light in colour and thin in material, which cling scantily about them, and look unutterably cold and spare.

Here are dingy men, dressed in dusty, faded mourning, and wearing huge gloves whose lengthy fingers project like talons—men, in fact, who seem to show their respect for the legacy by retaining as long as possible the emblems of distress for the testator's death. They pass in amidst the bustling of spruce clerks, or the easy saunter of redundant-whiskered and gorgeously apparelled stockbrokers, with the highly-washed appearance which belongs to those gentlemen.

The crowd waiting in the dividend office, under the letters from A to Z, grows larger, and the little old lady can scarcely sign her name, although her grand-daughter places the pen in her trembling hand.

Strange varieties of expression dwell upon that assemblage of faces, as they receive the printed paper which will be exchanged for money in the room appropriated to that purpose.

The burly countryman who takes gold sees future improvements in his styes and stables, but not without the half-uneasy consciousness that the money by right belongs to the "missus," and she ought to have a new

gown out of it at least. The little old dame, tottering on by help of an umbrella paralytic as herself, and her companion's arm, will have a cosy, comfortable tea and a hot supper, and will certainly call at the grocer's on her way home. The buttoned-up old fellow with that dyed moustache thinks ruefully of the late races, on which he lost heavily, and hopes for better fortune next time, of which he doubts when he sees the slender balance of his six months' claim. The young widow is all unused to encounter such a scene alone and unprotected; but all are not too busy to give her the information she needs; and, indeed, that sorrowful but sweet face might well cause even a busy man to turn and regard it with a sympathetic glance, even though his thoughts were at the moment fixed on the speculation which must turn out so successful. The more dashing relict who has now discarded weeds, and whose rosy children are in the carriage at the door, will make an excursion to the Lowther Arcade before going home, perhaps taking St. Paul's-churchyard in her way; and it is tolerably certain that the money-counter will adjourn to Birrell's opposite, and lunch off mock turtle and iced punch.

One and all have commenced anew to scheme and apportion, and in thought to spend and barter, the golden eggs. Some may have been imprudently pulling feathers from the goose who lays them, by selling out their ample stock to meet the demands of extravagance or folly.

From the feeble old lady who creeps onward with her load of years to the boy who sees no end either to enjoyment or the means of procuring it, that motley crowd passes in and out till the last coin rings from the cashier's copper shovel, and the business of the dividend office closes for the day.

Wanderings in Half-a-Guinea.

BY MAJOR MONK-LAUSEN.

CHAPTER XX.—POLITICAL SCHEMES.

I THINK it is Sir Samuel Baker who says somewhere that he can conceive no more perfect form of Government than a pure despotism, provided always that he is the despot. The great traveller knows well what it is to be in a wild and bookless land, where it is impossible to verify a quotation from even one's most favourite author, and will, I trust, pardon me if I have saddled him with another man's witticism. But the sentiment is one which I sympathize with entirely.

Constitutional monarchs I do not envy—indeed, their incomes are the only pleasant elements of their sovereignty, and a love of power would be better gratified in the situation of a petty Republican official, who can exercise a good deal of real, undiluted tyranny in the name of freedom and equality; though, certainly, he is always liable to be denounced and ousted by some one of face and lungs more brazen than his own. But to be a real, good, old-fashioned right-diviner, able to pursue every little hobby, gratify every little caprice, and cut off the heads of all who were obstinate or impertinent, with no questions asked, had always appeared to me a most desirable berth, and one I never, in my wildest dreams, hoped to fill.

There was now, however, a fine opening for an ambitious man; and I determined to have a trial of kingly cares, and see whether my head lay very uneasily.

I was desirous of promoting the welfare and improvement of my subjects, so long as my own pleasures were not interfered with. But the passion of my heart was sport, and I determined that my kingdom should be a well-stocked preserve, and my people keepers and beaters.

In the first place, the country had to be settled, and my authority established. The ease with which this was accomplished might astonish many worthy politicians; but in truth there were but three things necessary for success—unbounded audacity, good luck, and that talent which is termed the gift of the gods by poets, but is better known to the vulgar as the "gift of the gab."

When the people had recovered from the three days' big drink and prolonged ballet which was held in celebration of the victory, I sent a party of ambassadors to make a round of all the Krep villages, expounding the state of affairs, and carrying Krakrane's skull as a token. This trophy had been placed in the neighbourhood of an ant's nest, and was like ivory; and I may here mention incidentally that I have had it converted into a goblet, mounted in gold, and carved by a native artist with a representation of the engagement in which the original possessor lost it. I have lodged it for a short time at the office in Tavistock-street, and believe that the editor is willing to show it, and, indeed, permit it to be used by any one who will call with a bottle of sparkling Burgundy in his pocket.

The entire Krep tribe was summoned to meet me on the plain of Asor, on the second full moon from that time; and, meanwhile, each village that was inclined to accept my aid in the reduction of the Kralls was invited to send from five to ten young men, according to the strength of the community, to be instructed in military exercises.

My own personal followers had already learned the rudiments of drill. I set to work at once to perfect them, and Atah and Tulu were soon efficient enough to act as officers, and superintend in my absence, while the other six made really capital drill-sergeants; their only fault being that they were apt to be too handy with the little canes I taught them to carry in order to look smart, but which I never intended them to employ for the production of smart in others.

"Dress up, number three!" was sometimes obeyed with a bound, but was followed by a most unsoldierlike rubbing. However, the recruits seemed to take it in good part. A cuff or a stripe does not anger a Poopooan as it would an European; so while the work progressed satisfactorily I did not interfere, and by the time the first batches came in from other villages I had twenty men able to instruct.

By degrees the rudiments of a new state of society grew up. I was the head; under me were Atah and Tulu, each commanding a battalion, with the assistance of Booboo, Tata, Ponda, Squeely, Work, and Coger respectively—these worthies rising rapidly from the position of drill-sergeants to that of majors. Under them, again, were captains, lieutenants, sergeants, corporals, selected for activity and intelligence, somewhat roughly, it is true, though I made fewer mistakes than might have been expected, and when I did find that I

had promoted the wrong man, I very soon changed him.

I was forced, by the state of affairs, to introduce all these grades of ranks, and to take care that they were invested with real power, and were not merely nominal. For any fighting we had was sure to take place principally in the thick forest, at extended order, where everything would depend upon the commanders of sections, with whose training I therefore took the greatest possible pains, at the same time that I supported their authority to the utmost. They did not receive higher pay than the full privates, because military service was compulsory, and no one got any pay at all; but it was easy enough to confer privileges upon them which they valued far above beads and cloth, and a step in rank very soon became the one thing most coveted by every male Krep, and held in greatest estimation by his wife.

The insignia of rank were feathers, one worn behind, stuck in the waistband, and another on the forehead, secured by a fillet; so that whether he were going or coming, a man's rank was at once visible. I alone wore the feathers of two different birds—at my back a fine ostrich plume, curling up between my shoulder-blades; on my brow the spoils of an eagle.

Peter Tromp wore bird of paradise feathers.

Atah and Tulu were distinguished by those of the golden pheasant.

My six original Kreps—whose freedom, by the by, had been restored to them in an imposing ceremony—were entitled to wear those of the silver pheasant.

The next rank was designated by a parrot's feather; the next by that of a partridge; the next by that of a mallard; the next by that of a magpie. The remainder were not allowed to wear any feathers at all.

It must not be understood that the birds above mentioned were exactly similar to those which Europeans are familiar with. I give them the names of those which they most resembled in plumage, in order to avoid the tediousness of a scientific description. When my work on the natural history of Half-a-Guinea is ready, those readers who desire greater accuracy can be gratified.

The penalty for wearing feathers to which a man was not entitled was a week's exposure in the pillory, with the right of all the children to shoot at him with blunt arrows, and of the women to give him the toko at discretion.

The various grades thus established ceased after a time to be purely military, but intimated social status, and became hereditary; and thus an aristocracy was established. But I am anticipating.

Directly Peter Tromp's wounds were healed, which did not take long—a decoction of the phreman tree being a wonderful specific for cuts and bruises—I sent him back, with a strong detachment, to Howdow, to bring off the muskets, powder, lead, and other stores which I had left there. I also instructed him to purchase all the other firearms he could, with the specie which we had found on board the *Josef*.

By canoeing down the river for fifty miles, and then taking the next direct line, he accomplished the journey in three days, and returned in less than a fortnight, with his commission admirably executed; for, in addition to the forty muskets I had left in store, he had managed to procure seventy others, more or less

serviceable. So that, counting the weapons taken from the Kralls which had not been destroyed by the explosions, the twenty guns originally in the hands of the Kreps, those brought by the detachment from other villages, and the guns of Atah, Tulu, &c., I had under my command a body of three hundred men, all armed with firelocks of one sort or another.

To supply these with ammunition, I set myself at first to the manufacture of gun cotton; but finding that there were caves within a few miles where any amount of saltpetre might be gathered, I found it more convenient to instruct a certain number of intelligent natives in the manufacture of gunpowder, which they soon learned to make of excellent quality. Having likewise, in the course of my ascent of Mount Asor, observed signs of lead, I organized an expedition to that region, and showed the men how to collect the ore and smelt it; and though it was not very plentiful or of first-rate quality in these early days, it was sufficient and pure enough for the purpose required.

The organization of these and the other working parties, and the appointment of those who showed the

others who could be trusted to superintend and keep the others up to the mark, received feather rank.

As the wounded Kralls became convalescent, I allowed them, one by one, to depart unscathed—a proceeding which seemed so utterly insane to the people, that they got an elderly man, who was rather a favourite of mine, to remonstrate upon the subject. Accordingly, one evening when the labours of the day were done, and I was soothing my overwrought nerves with a pipe of tobacco, moistened with a calabash of palm wine, he asked leave to make a few remarks; and when I told him that I was always glad to hear what he had to say, he began cross-examining me as follows:—

"We are to make war on the Kralls, are we not, milor?"

"Certainly, Nunkos."

"And if they resist, we shall fight them?"

"Yes."

"And kill as many as we can?"

"To be sure."

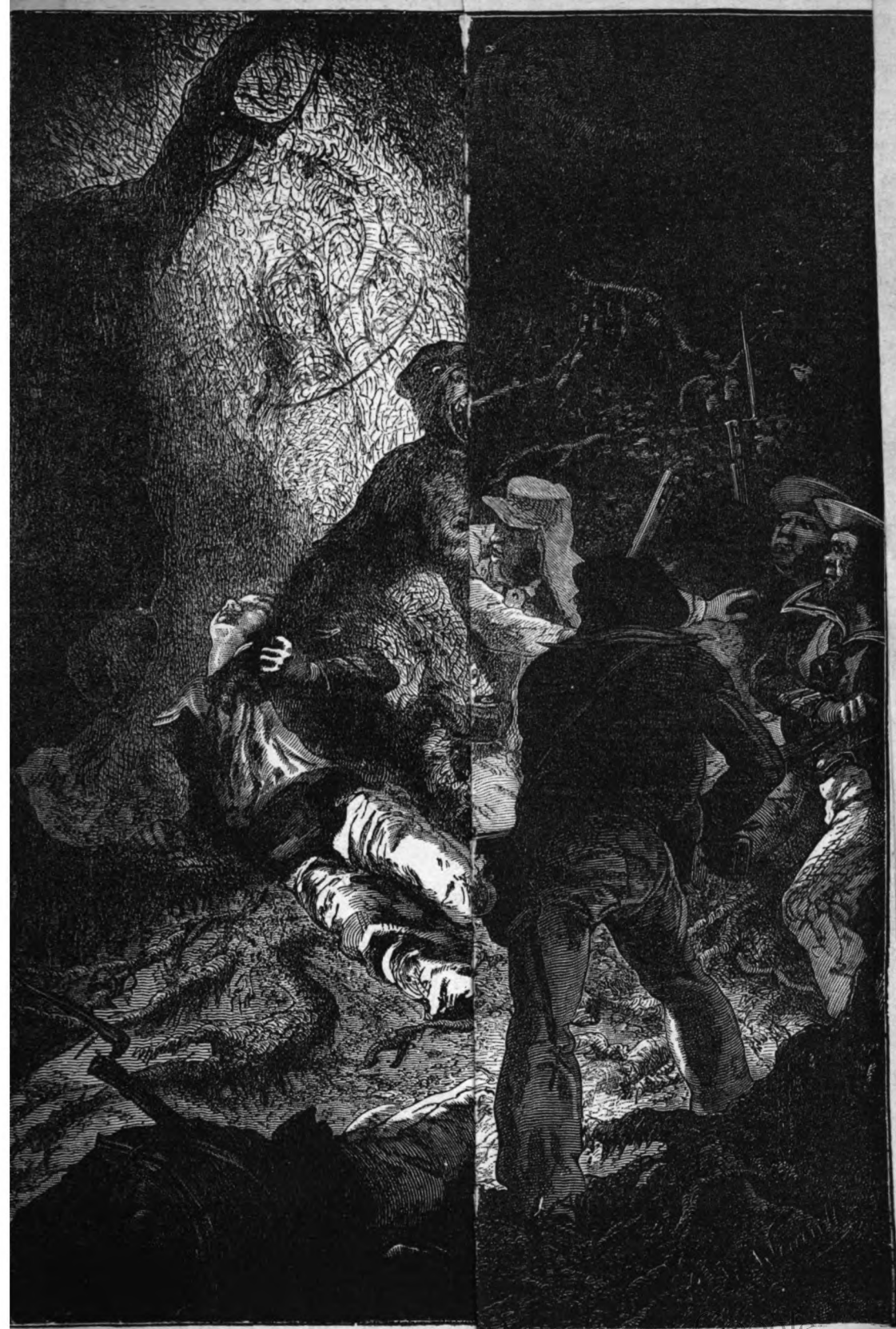
"And which is the most easy—to kill a man when he is lying helpless, or when he has a loaded gun in his hand?"

"There is less risk when he is lying helpless."

The Poopooan Socrates thought he had me in a logical corner, and cried, triumphantly—

"Then, milor, why do you take pains to heal the Kralls who are in your power, and let them go away to get guns, and be killed afterwards with greater trouble?"

"Listen to me, Nunkos," I said. "Kreps and Kralls are all of one race, and there is plenty of room for both. If we make war upon the Kralls, it is to teach them to live with us peaceably, not to destroy them. For if we did so there would be too few Alfoers in the country, and one of two things would happen—either the moolahs, and the crocodiles, and the other wild beasts would become so numerous as to make men live in the trees like monkeys; or else the Dutch would take possession of the island, and kill the Kreps in their turn. But these Kralls, who have been treated kindly, will tell them how powerful we are, and what preparations we are making; and, at the same time that we can destroy them by hundreds at a distance when they come



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as foes, what capital friends we are when the fight is over. And these things will be talked about in all the Krall villages; and when, after a battle or two, they find it true that we are stronger than they are, they will not be driven by despair to go on fighting to the last; but, remembering our kindness to their wounded, will be encouraged to submit themselves, and ask for peace. And then all the Alfoers, both Krepes and Kralls, will live happily and securely in their villages, grow corn and tobacco, hunt, gather ivory and birds of paradise feathers, and keep the Dutch traders in their proper place on the coast."

Nunkos listened to me with increasing gravity; sat silent for a long time after I had ceased, drawing his fingers at intervals across his forehead. Then he slowly rose, and said—

"Milor is very wise; Nunkos must chew his words."

And he walked away, with his eyes bent on the ground.

How he represented to his friends what I had said I do not know, but I heard no more questioning of the wisdom of my policy.

All this while there was some difficulty about the commissariat. My time and attention were so fully occupied that I had little leisure to go shooting; and if I had done nothing else than seek game, I could hardly have shot enough for my present party, which consisted, with the recruits from other villages, the women and the children, of fully six hundred mouths.

And then the explosion of nitro-glycerine had scared all the game on that side of the river for miles, driving the creatures into the recesses of the forest; and the daily stir of drill was not likely to invite them back to the neighbourhood; so that venison and monkey meat had to be procured across the stream, while the little stores of corn, yams, &c., collected in the village could not last long.

Of course, there was no fear of actual starvation. My people had only to take to the woods, as English children go blackberrying, and bountiful Nature would provide them with fruits sufficient to support existence.

Or, if animal food were necessary, I had but to organize a hunting party, and penetrate earnestly into the depths of the woods. But such plans would interfere with drill, and it was imperative that my little army should be well in hand, fit to act, and accustomed to obey my slightest signal by the general gathering of the clan on the plain of Asor.

I felt that the well-being of the country depended so strongly on the unanimity of my election to the office of supreme ruler, that it was a positive though somewhat painful duty to have an efficient force entirely devoted to my interests, for the purpose of ensuring enthusiasm, repressing opposition, and saving society.

CHAPTER XXI.—THE POOPOOAN SNAKE-CHARMER.

"SUPPOSE you give us some big snake to eat, milor," suggested Atah, whose intelligence was such that I often asked his opinion, and whom I had now consulted on the question of rations.

He had already organized a body of women and children, under the direction of his wife, Piti, to collect yams and other bread-fruits in the woods; but a little animal food was absolutely necessary to keep up the strength and spirits of men who were engaged in the

unaccustomed work of drill all day, and who were shortly wanted for active service.

"The flesh of the big snake, such as caught our cow, is beautiful meat—good to taste, good to make one strong."

"And where shall we find these snakes, Atah?" I inquired.

"There are plenty on the other side of the river."

"Are they easy to catch?"

"No, not without Wachnah; but Wachnah can draw them."

Wachnah was the principal Krep musician. He played on two reed pipes, something like flageolets; holding one in each hand—sometimes blowing through one, sometimes through the other, and again with both at his lips together.

I myself could never detect any particular melody in his performance. He seemed to blow away, now high, now low, according to his fancy, without any attempt at a tune; though there was certainly a sort of rhythm preserved, if you listened attentively. But this art was in very high esteem with his people, and he could excite them to a perfect terpsichorean frenzy.

I have seen them dance to his piping till they fell down exhausted, and, indeed, have myself felt stirred and excited by his barbaric strains—just as one sometimes is by the drone of a bagpipe. That he should possess the power of the Indian snake charmers was, however, quite a new idea to me, and I sent for him.

He was a spare man, with prominent eyes, and the wild look of a prophet or a fanatic. One would have said that he had seen a ghost on some occasion, and was always expecting its reappearance, and he came with his pipes in his hand.

"Wachnah," said I, "I hear that the snakes and the serpents love your music."

"No, milor; nothing vile loves my music. But the creeping things come when I play, though they like it not."

"Well, at all events, you can draw them out of their holes; and we want a big serpent for dinner. Do you know where they are?"

Wachnah gazed into the far distance, as if the ghost was once more visible, and played a prelude. Then he began to speak, accompanying himself, as it were; first uttering a few words, and then blowing a few notes.

"I see a cave (*tootle*), a little cave (*too*); but deep, deep, deep (*too-o-too-o-too-o*)—on the other side of the river (*tiddleum—tiddeum—umty*)," and so on.

When he had been favouring me with this sort of recitative for some time, Tata came up, and, bringing his hand to his forehead in correct military salute, said that he understood Wachnah was going to bring a snake for dinner, and I might remember on a former occasion that he, Tata, had a speciality for skinning large serpents. Now, when the reptile was under the influence of the music charm, he could skin him in a far better manner than he had been able to do before; that, if the matter were properly managed, the snake might be made to skin itself; and then, in addition to my obtaining the spoils in the best possible condition, not cut or bruised in any way, the meat would be very superior, as when flayed after death there was apt to be a flavour. So he came to offer his services, and ask leave from parade.

I accorded him this, and likewise determined to take a holiday myself, and see how the whole thing was managed.

Wachnah and I, accompanied by Tata and five men armed with short sticks of hard and heavy wood, entered a canoe, and paddled across the river. Mooring the vessel to the other bank, we then penetrated into the forest, the musician leading the way; for I did not intend to combine any shooting with the snake drawing, though I might have had some sport with the deer and kangaroo. The retrieving and bringing away the game would have interfered with the principal object of the excursion.

When we had gone about a couple of miles, we came to some broken, rocky ground, thickly overgrown with foliage; and, forcing our way through some bushes, stood before the entrance of a black aperture, into which a man could have crawled on his hands and knees.

Approaching within three feet of the mouth of this, Wachnah began to play, and had hardly been piping for five minutes before a large black snake glided out of a neighbouring bush, and stood up on end in our midst; then a long, graceful, green snake elongated himself from a tree overhead, and hung close above the musician, with his forked tongue quivering like a flame of straw. Anon a squat, hideous, toad-coloured reptile protruded from the shelter of a boulder hard by, and joined the audience.

These and other venomous varieties were struck by the men with their short sticks, and laid writhing and impotent in the rank herbage, where their heads were crushed with further blows.

At length there was a sibillant, rushing sound, as of escaping steam, from the depths of the cavity; two glittering eyes were next visible in the gloomy recess; a forked, quickly-darting tongue about a yard long shot out, and was withdrawn; and then an enormous snake-head, which almost filled the cavity, slowly emerged into the light of day. The volume of the enormous python's body followed slowly, telescopically, projected by that mysterious motive power by which these limbless, wingless creatures rise, glide, and dart.

When its head was a yard from Wachnah's face, and on a level with it, the serpent stopped, and so remained, slightly swaying from side to side in time with the music.

The musician had need of good nerve, and of good breath; if he stopped playing the charm would cease, appetite would resume its sway, and he would inevitably be swallowed. But while the music lasted, the monster was perfectly insusceptible of any other sensation, and any liberty might be taken with it unresented.

When he saw that the spell was complete, Wachnah retired towards the river, piping as he went; the snake followed, more and more of it surging out of the narrow cave, till I began to think it had no other end. But this proved an error, and all was out at last.

The rest of the party walked on each side of the creature's head. Ever and anon, smaller snakes would glide from the bushes or descend from the trees in our path, drawn by the music. These were immediately struck down by the sticks of the Krepes, and our wake was strewn with writhing, back-broken reptiles, upon whom a peculiar sort of bird, which preys upon ve-

nomous reptiles, darted with avidity. When we were within sight of the river's bank, two of the men ran forward, to get the canoe ready for the piper to step into conveniently, while Tata came to my side, and said—

"Milor, take your sharp knife, and draw it round the serpent, a foot from its head, cutting well through the skin."

I did as he desired me, Wachnah stopping and facing the monster, playing low notes with increased energy, while I made the circular incision, which was not done in a moment, as the neck, even at that tapering part, was thicker than a man's thigh.

The creature took no more notice of the operation than a patient under chloroform.

When it was completed, Tata thrust his hand into the wound, and took a firm grip of the skin; a Krep on the other side did the same, and Wachnah turned and continued his retreat towards the canoe.

The serpent followed, and, as the two men kept their hold, in doing so it forced itself gradually out of its skin.

The sight was horrible, revolting, but yet exceedingly curious, as yard after yard of stripped snake protruded. It was one quarter skinned by the time we reached the canoe, in which the two men were now stationed, paddle in hand. Wachnah and I followed, the latter still playing; the remainder of the party remained behind, to hold on to the skin; for when it came to the centre and thickest part, the fit was tighter. The canoe was pushed off and propelled across the river, the serpent still following and skinning itself as it advanced, till, when we reached the farther bank, and were some ten paces up the shore, it was entirely stripped. Then it suddenly collapsed.

Tata, on the other side, had chopped off the end of its tail, thereby paralyzing the whole vast length. Men on our side of the river were ready with hooks and ropes, with which they commenced to haul the serpent out of the river, before any stray crocodile should appropriate any portion of the meat; but I had pretty well cleared that part of the stream of those amphibious creatures, and it was secured in its entirety.

Returning across the river, I examined the skin, which was turned inside out through its entire length, exactly like the finger of a new kid glove pulled off in a hurry, and sprinkled it with a preparation of which spirits of camphor formed a principal ingredient, as I found that this was a protection against the attacks of ants.

I may here say that the skin was beautifully preserved, and would have been an object of great interest in the British Museum; but unfortunately it was found impossible, after it had been protected against decay, to turn it outside out again.

I decline to mention the exact number of people who feasted on the flesh, for you would certainly suspect me of exaggeration.

It was boiled, roasted, fried, stewed, and devoured with great gusto.

Of course I tasted it under favourable conditions, as Peter Tromp the talented prepared my portion; but I should say that anybody who liked eels would approve of it.

It was firm and delicate of flavour, but perhaps rather too rich to be eaten every day.

A Casual Acquaintance.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE "TERRIBLE SIGHTS OF LONDON."

IS that his dorg? Well, yes, he is, and he aint, in a manner o' speakin'. I might ha' seen a little lass as brought him his bit o' dinner (it was a savoury stew in a huge yellow basin); well, the dorg followed her home one night, and they'd kept him ever since—leastways, he "*finds* himself." Goes out for a turn in the mornin', and comes back just afore twelve as reglar as clock-work, then takes another turn towards the afternoon, an' picks up a livin' somehow about the butchers' shops, or maybe has bits saved for him in the gentlefolks' aireys.

Has read somewhere or other—(I come upon him at an auspicious moment, when his heart is opened by good cheer)—has read somewhere, in some of these 'ere periodicals, that the Injuns look forrard to their dorgs havin' a free admission to heaven, where they'll jine company again arter they're dead; an' don't see why it shouldn't be, for his part. There's some dogs as he'd sooner trust than a good many men, and that's more like fellow-creatures, a precious deal.

Seeing, by the production of a short pipe, that he is in a conversationally contemplative mood, and the corner which he has selected being retired and favourable to the interchange of opinion, I venture to touch upon other topics as connected with the great subject of "the working man."

His opinion generally is, that what the working man wants is to be let alone, or else put in the way of doin' somethin' of his own accord—work, or otherways; but not to be perpetually jawed at. One way or another, there's a little too much talk, that's *his* opinion.

There's the Institoot, now, the Mechanics' Institoot—the place as belonged to old Bowerpeg, that used to be a tea-garden, but got into difficulties, and was built over. Well, the gents that come down there to lecturer might *mean* well—he admitted they might *mean* well; but they mostly, don't I see, look upon the men as though they was in an infant school; and, one way or another, they're a size or so too big for infants, most on 'em. And, perhaps, there's some as liked the place better when Bowerpeg had it, 'specially when he went into the licensed wittling, when it was too late, and didn't answer. Then, in the matter of a drop o' beer, bricklayin' a different thing to lecterin', or readin', or mixin' up of gases, or what-not, an' tea aint always handy when you've been hard at it all day.

Not but what, he concedes, that there's no sense in settin' night after night in the public-house—he himself don't hold with that; but some of them there gents as lectures to the workin' man, an' writes tracks or what-not, they talk as though they expect him and his mates to go home and put on a black tail-coat after work of a evening, an' set down a readin' an' a figurin' with books about politike economy or something.

Now, how's it possible, he'd ask me, for men to go on that way; mightn't he jest as well ask them there gents to take a spell with a hod o' bricks up a ladder? Not but what they mean uncommon well, no doubt; an' they might do some good if they'd only look upon the workin' men as men, and not want to train 'em up, when they're pretty well trained up a'ready, one way or another.

He was havin' a bit o' talk with one of the lecterers as 'ad been a goin' on at the Institoot one night, and he says to him, "We can't put on your clothes; our corde-roys an' fustians suits our line better, and they may be mended, but they can't be altered into somethink else. No more our ways can't; they can be improved, maybe, an' some old ways left off, but not right out of the pattern, and out o' new stuff—'tain't reasonable, that aint. This was the conversation, don't I see, as took place between him and that there gent?"

He doesn't know exactly what Liberty is, if it aint people managin' their own affairs pretty much as they like, or, at all events, without bein' looked after an' jawed at, every hand's turn. Now, this is where it is that most institoots an' people's clubs, an' what not, don't answer in the long run. No more model lodgin'-houses don't, mostways. That's where it is, there's a deal too much o' the model about 'em; an' what with one thing or another, poor people think they might as well a'most go into the house at once.

By house he means the union, which seems to him the sort of pattern that one or two of the "dwellin's" has been built after. Not but what they're solid as to workmanship, and—barrin' the stairs an' the long white-wash corridors, which is awfully like the house, sure'y—the rooms all right an' comfortable. But there's something in the old sayin' that an Englishman's house is his castle—which, as far as he can reckon it, means there's no with yer leave nor by yer leave so long as the rent's all square, an' you can shut anybody else out, or walk off with yer door key in yer pocket and no questions asked.

Knew a man as liv'd in one o' the model blocks once, an' he said it was like the model prison without the diet, an' a workus with the landlord-for a board every Saturday. As for him, he'd always had a little place of his own, an' as handy as he could to his work, so as he could have his vittles brought to him without goin' to the public to brile a bit o' steak or a beef-skirt—mostly toughish and a good deal o' cinders—at the tap-room fire.

Then he likes to see little 'Liza and the dorg. Seems like being at home a'most; and he's at liberty to have his dinner how he likes, without takin' anything for the good o' the house when it don't do *him* no good. No. The model buildin's is like what he was sayin' about the clothes—they aint made for the use o' the workin' man as he *is* in himself, but for somebody quite different, and they do somehow seem to be a misfit.

Well, no; he never knew anybody as did believe in Equality. That, he fancied, was in a manner proved by the way the people went on as lectered about the rights o' the people, and all that. As far as he could make out, they was for kickin' up a row about the rights o' the people when it served their turn, and keepin' the people off from comin' too close at the same time. It seems to him that there aint no rights nor no wrongs to be altered by a man goin' about after this, an' that, an' t'other, trades' unions an' the rest, an' leavin' his wife and young uns on the parish. There's equality there, though, it's true, when you're once inside the walls o' the union, an' aint a favourite o' the master or the board.

Why, there aint even equality at the club, when you come to think what a pull the landlord of the public an' the society's officers gets out of it. There's been

nothing for it but to *have* clubs, an' they must be held somewhere where the men as get together can jine in a drop o' beer an' a pipe if they're so minded; but not to that extent that it is done. There's no equality, neither, with the trustees as lends, or is supposed to lend, the club money when it's hard up, an' takes the interest on it. There's no equality when the club pays the visitors half-a-crown a piece for carryin' five shillin's to a member as is on the sick list. There's no equality when the landlord's the treasurer, perpetual and unaltered. There *is* equality in the watery sort o' beer as is too often served up, to say nothing o' the goes o' sperrits a good deal under proof, which is, perhaps, all for the best; and there is equality in makin' the members each of 'em buy a pewter token every club night, price fourpence, which was obliged to be took out in beer or sperrits aforesaid.

As for Fraternity, which, he's heard, is all one as brotherly feelin'—there's a many societies, friendly, burial, or what not, where the members call one another brother so-an'-so; and he aint a' goin' to say that there's no ground for it. Bad as the workin' men may be, they've got a feelin' for each other when things go cross; but that, as far as he can make out, don't come through the lecturer, nor yet, he's bound to say, through the agents, as they're called, as goes here and there, travelin' about the country, enjoyin' of themselves, and gettin' up unions, an' what not, where they nail subscriptions to go further, but not, as the sayin' is, to fare worse.

There's no equality nor fraternity to be got out of that lot, as ever he knew; no, nor yet no liberty. If I'll excuse his sayin' so, there's more of all three in our conversation together. But, conversation and such games as we've been a-talkin' about is one thing, and goin' about your work's another, aint it? And here comes little 'Liza and the dorg to fetch away his dinner things.

The Rarer Ferns of Devon.

IT is the beautiful and unrivalled forms of fern-life which fling over Devonshire scenery its almost indescribable charm. Peer at low tide into yon dark and dripping cavern which yawns upon the sea! The bright sunshine that dances upon the rippling waves pauses at the cavern's mouth, as if not daring to penetrate its gloomy depths. But just one tiny gleam of light has ventured to cross the threshold; and sparkling on the dripping water, it flashes through the opaque blackness a kind of electric light.

As the water falls, drip, drip, into the pool below, the light increases, and then—oh, glorious sight!—you see at the side and on the roof of this lonesome sea-cave, the beautiful Sea-spleenwort (*Asplenium marinum*), hiding its roots in the cavern walls, and spreading out its bright green and shining fronds, that they may luxuriate in the dark humidity of its chosen retreat.

Or peer over yonder cliff, whose inaccessible sides overhang the seething waves! Look closely into the shady cleft which nestles under yon projecting spur! There you may see, far out of your reach, one of the most rare and exquisite of the British ferns—the Maidenhair (*Adiantum capillus veneris*).

Could you venture near enough to grasp it in your

hand, you would indeed recognize that it is one of the most exquisite of plants. Its fine, black, wiry frond-stems, like a dark maiden's hair—it is most appropriately named—rise in clusters from its crown; the main frond-stems being branched with smaller and more beautiful hair-like stems, which bear upon their tender points the delicate, light-green, fan-shaped leaflets.

Wandering through the cool lanes of Devonshire, you may, too, meet with the fragrant, hay-scented Buckler Fern (*Lastrea æmula*), which emits so beautiful an odour when pressed in the hand; with the delicately and transparently leaved Marsh Buckler Fern (*Lastrea thelypteris*); with the Mountain Buckler Fern (*Lastrea montana*), whose silvery fronds make the air fragrant when you tread upon them in their incipient unrolled state.

But these varieties are not to be commonly encountered in every Devonshire lane. And still rarer—though found in Devonshire—are the Lanceolate Spleenwort (*Asplenium lanceolatum*), the tiny Forked Spleenwort (*Asplenium septentrionale*), the Tunbridge Filmy Fern (*Hymenophyllum Tunbridgense*), and Wilson's Filmy Fern (*Hymenophyllum Wilsoni*). The Moonwort (*Botrychium lunaria*), and the Common Adder's-tongue (*Ophioglossum vulgatum*), are also ferns of Devonshire growth.—*The Fern Paradise*. By Francis George Heath.

A Hero's Experience.

THE *Koelnische Zeitung* has published a series of letters which Marshal Blücher addressed to his wife during the campaign of 1813-14, and during his visit to London in the latter year. Blücher's orthography is curious, and might convey some useful hints to the advocates of a phonetic system of spelling; of grammar he has not the least notion. On the 3rd of June, 1814, he writes from Boulogne (or Boulonge, as he spells the name):—

"Yesterday I dined with the Duke of Klarents on board the ship-of-the-line *Imprenabele*. I am still deaf from the thunder of the cannon, and almost upset by the marks of honour bestowed upon me. If things continue like this I shall turn mad in England. . . . The English come to this place in hundreds to see me, and I am obliged to shake hands with every one of them. The ladies quite make love to me. They are the most crack-brained (*nerrischste*) people I know. I bring a sword and a sabre with me, which have 40,000 thalers' worth of jewels on them. The City of London has likewise presented me with a sword, the clouds at London have admitted me without ballot, and at Edenburg, in Scotland, they have made me honorary member of their learned society. It will be a wonder if I don't turn mad."

His first letter from London is dated 6th of June, 1814:—

"Yesterday I landed in England, and I hardly know how it is I still am alive. The people almost tore me to pieces. They took out my horses, and carried me, and thus I came to London. Against my will they took me to the Regent's castle. The Regent received me in a manner not to be described. He hung his por-

trait, richly set with brilliants, and attached to a dark blue ribbon, round my neck, and said, 'Be sure you have no truer friend on the earth than myself.' I lodge with him. I must also tell you that the King, in spite of my resistance, made me a prince yesterday. . . . Your brother is with me, and witnesses all that happens to me. The people carry me upon their hands. Whenever they catch sight of me they shout, and 10,000 of them are together in no time. In uniform I cannot appear at all."

On the 12th of June, he writes:—

"Unless constantly surrounded by guards and attendants they tear me. If I ride in a carriage they take out the horses. I am being fatigued in an inhuman manner, am sitting to three painters at the same time, and have hardly been able as yet to look around me."

The Egotist's Note-book.

A HUMOROUS story has been going the round of town, which, if not true, is *ben trovato*. It is to the effect that a successful London business man has the very sensible habit of gathering to his dinners such distinguished or notorious gentlemen as will come to his net. Upon one occasion, the host had the pleasure of bringing together and introducing a famous journalist to one of those monetary monarchs who rejoice in the nickname of "My uncle." The ceremony was performed; the great pawnbroker was courteous; but the journalist, in remembrance of the poverty and shifts of his profession, bowed to the ground, and exclaimed, "Delighted to meet you, Mr. Duplicate; for though I've known you all these years, I never saw your legs before." Even though nothing preceded this speech, it might be called a counter joke.

Here is a chance or some theatrical manager with plenty of spirit:—

A N Original MS.—BLUEBEARD IN BULGARIA.—
A Drama, subject as above, will be sent for inspection to any respectable Manager, who may apply to ———, &c.

There is room in such a drama as this for harrowing scenes, the decapitation of gutta percha figures with scimitars, and show enough to gratify a Sanger. It is very doubtful, however, whether a dramatic manager will be found willing to take a play as he would a plain cook—by advertisement.

A very interesting account has been given of a relic of old Paris—the remains of the ancient Hôtel St. Paul, a royal palace, where Charles V. was burned to death at a masked ball. Though every pane of glass in the place is broken, it contains a singular collection of books and furniture. In one room are several volumes of newspapers bound, and the coverings are half rotted by the rain which drips through the ceiling. The floor is littered with books, which appear to have been lying there for years, and are ready to crumble into dust. In a bed-chamber are to be seen a gilt crown, several specimens of minerals, pictures literally crusted with dust, two or three rusty clocks, and a mass of hangings and curtains, which are falling to pieces. In a bed-room on the floor above are 50 or 60 dolls,

mounted upon wire springs, which, to judge by their appearance, must at one time have been very elaborately attired. In the reception-rooms, the decaying furniture covers the floors, and one can hardly walk a yard without coming in the way of some object or other. Beds, tapestry, large mirrors, rare and precious cabinets, are lying about in almost artistic confusion. I believe that the reason of this is to be found in the fact that the property is, as we should say, in Chancery.

At the revision of the voters' lists for the county of Somerset, at Bath, the attention of the revising barrister was called to the fact that Lord Beaconsfield, who was on the register as an owner of property in Bath, was no longer entitled to vote, having become a peer. The entry on the register was as follows:—"Benjamin Disraeli, of Grosvenor-gate, Park-lane, London; freehold house, 5, Brook-street, Bath." In expunging the vote, the revising barrister remarked that it was not every revising barrister who could remove a Prime Minister from a voting list by a mere stroke of the pen. Alas, poor Benjamin! But how proud that barrister must have felt. I'll be bound to say he made a very thick stroke through the name.

How delightfully we advance in the arts of peace! The Gatling mitrailleuse, which, despite its murderous action, has never found much favour with the army, is now being fitted in many of the vessels that are preparing for sea. The *Alexandra* and *Shannon* are each of them to receive two of these weapons on board, to be especially employed against marksmen posted in the rigging, or hostile marines engaged in firing through the portholes, or in repelling any attempt at boarding. It is also intended to arm our gunboats and sloops with the same destructive implements, for coast and river fighting. Six iron gunboats, which are just now being built for service in the China rivers and upon the African coast, will be so constructed as to carry two Gatling guns amidships, and they will be mounted in such a manner that the weapons can be taken on shore in an emergency. These machines, which consist simply of a bundle of rifle-barrels revolving round a centre, are capable of discharging several hundred bullets per minute, and need but two pair of hands to work them. Why not improve upon this, and make a great Gatling to go by steam, and give our enemies a leaden hail-storm? How happy the man must feel who invented Gatlings, and what a consolation it will prove to his old age!

Taking a theatre is a popular way of getting rid of money, lately adopted by noblemen; but a happier way would be to become lessee of some public gardens, say Cremorne or the North Woolwich, both of which places for spending happy days seem to have landed their proprietors in the Bankruptcy Court. This is a hint worth taking. Why, Cremorne, if it is ever to let again, might be made a rival to Hurlingham by the addition to former attractions of a tournament of doves.

Giovanni Lorgentini, an Italian seaman, has been committed for trial at the Thames Police-court, for biting off a portion of a man's thumb. Our friend comes from the land of Romeo and Juliet, and has evidently

misinterpreted the custom mentioned in that play by Shakspeare—

Abram. Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

Samson. I do bite my thumb, sir.

The beginning of a quarrel where swords were drawn.

The omnibuses have lately exhibited placards inside, warning passengers to beware of pickpockets, male and female. These notices ought to be outside, and, in addition, adopted by the tram-car and railway companies, for the new plan adopted by the Barringtonians seems to be that of being at every ugly rush for seats, such as occur at certain times in connection with our public vehicles. Numerous instances have been brought forward of passengers being robbed of purse and watch. Two cases—watch cases—were in the morning papers one day last week.

Another horse dodge is being brought to light by a victim. The plan is to advertise that a gentleman has a horse he wishes to let on hire for three months for his keep during the winter. You go to the mews and see a man, who says he is acting for the gentleman, and agrees to let you have the horse on leaving £5 deposit, which he will return to you at the expiration of the time. You send the £5, expecting to get the horse, and all he does is to give a receipt for the money, as if it had been bought, and refuses to let it go till you pay another £25 or so. No wonder that Swift's Houyhnhnms held man, or the Yahoo, in very low estimation.

Agony columns read best at breakfast, for some of the morsels are very choice. Here is one from the *Daily News*:—

GREAT CRUELTY is unconsciously practised by many persons at this season. Hundreds of cats are shut out from houses whose inhabitants are leaving London. These animals will die of hunger after severe suffering. Attention is called to the matter.

Why, does not the humane advertiser see that "great cruelty is unconsciously practised by many persons" on their neighbours by keeping cats at all? The song of the nightingale is sweet, but when befurred instead of befeathered there is a plaintiveness in the note that maketh the ungodly use bad words, and hurl boots, bottles, and brushes from the window high.

Propheying is dangerous work, as proved by this anecdote, told by Mr. Ticknor. He had been dining with M. de Lesseps, and subsequently met Lord Palmerston at Lord Granville's.

"I told Lord Palmerston that I had been dining where I met Lesseps, and that he was full of his canal.

"He may be full of his canal," said the Premier, "but his canal will never be full of water, as the world will see."

"And then, having laughed heartily at his own poor joke, he went on, and abused Lesseps quite as much as, two hours before, Lesseps had abused him, though in a somewhat graver tone, explaining all the while his objections to the grand project, which it still seems to me can do England no harm, though it may much harm the stockholders, which is quite another thing."

I wonder what Pam would have said to the purchase of the canal shares by the Conservative party.

There is a castle to let on the Rhine, with one wing in a habitable state. Who wants a schloss? Baron Some-one-or-another is ready to let or sell; but in his advertisement he does not prove himself at all equal to the task of making the best of things. George Robins would have discoursed at length on the beauties of the rushing Rhine, the beady berries of the grapes, and the voluminous vineyards, even as he spoke of the litter of rose-leaves, and noise of the nightingales, in days gone by. The baron here advertises his castle for sale, and not only leaves out all reference to the deepest dungeon beneath the moat, but never even mentions the ghost. Of course a Rhenish castle must be haunted by the injured heroine, or the spirits of past and gone barons bold, who freebooted and carried off prisoners, to be afterwards ransomed. The chance is, however, a great one. Who'll buy?

It is a great thing to be a poet! Here is one of Christina Rossetti's soarings:—

A TRIAD.

Three sang of love together; one with lips
Crimson, with cheeks and bosom in a glow,
Flushed to the yellow hair and finger tips;
And one there sang who, soft and smooth as snow,
Bloomed like a tinted hyacinth at show;
And one was blue with famine after love
Who, like a harpstring snapped, rang harsh and low
The burden of what those were singing of.
One shamed herself in love, one temperately
Grew gross in soulless love, a sluggish wife;
One famished, died for love. Thus two of three
Took death for love and won him after strife;
One drone in sweetness like a fattened bee;
All on the threshold, yet all short of life.

It is beautiful, no doubt, and worthy of all praise; but one would like to know what it means, being too ignorant and soulless to soar so high.

Live and learn. A lady whom I much esteem lately wore a very pretty, iridescent grey dress, which she told me was a Japanese silk. I believed her; she believed it herself; but a newspaper tells us a different tale. Here is the advertisement—

JAPANESE.—The largest and most varied stock, chiefly the German make, excellent for wear, at prices hitherto unknown, beginning at 10d. the yard. The same has been sold at 2s. 6d.

I wonder how many more Japanese articles are chiefly the German make.

THE season has arrived when every one is thinking of turning from the sultriness of town life to the pleasures of a country tour. Ladies who take very little exercise when at home, with true British courage often undertake long and tedious journeys. It is of the highest importance, under such circumstances, that the clothing should in no way impede the proper circulation of the blood, but especially should the old but bad practice of gartering the leg be avoided. Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London, has provided the only means of remedying this in his New Patent Stocking Suspender, which he will send by post for 2d. extra. The prices are—Children's, 1s. 6d.; maids', 2s.; ladies', 3s. Our advice is to write at once for a pair.

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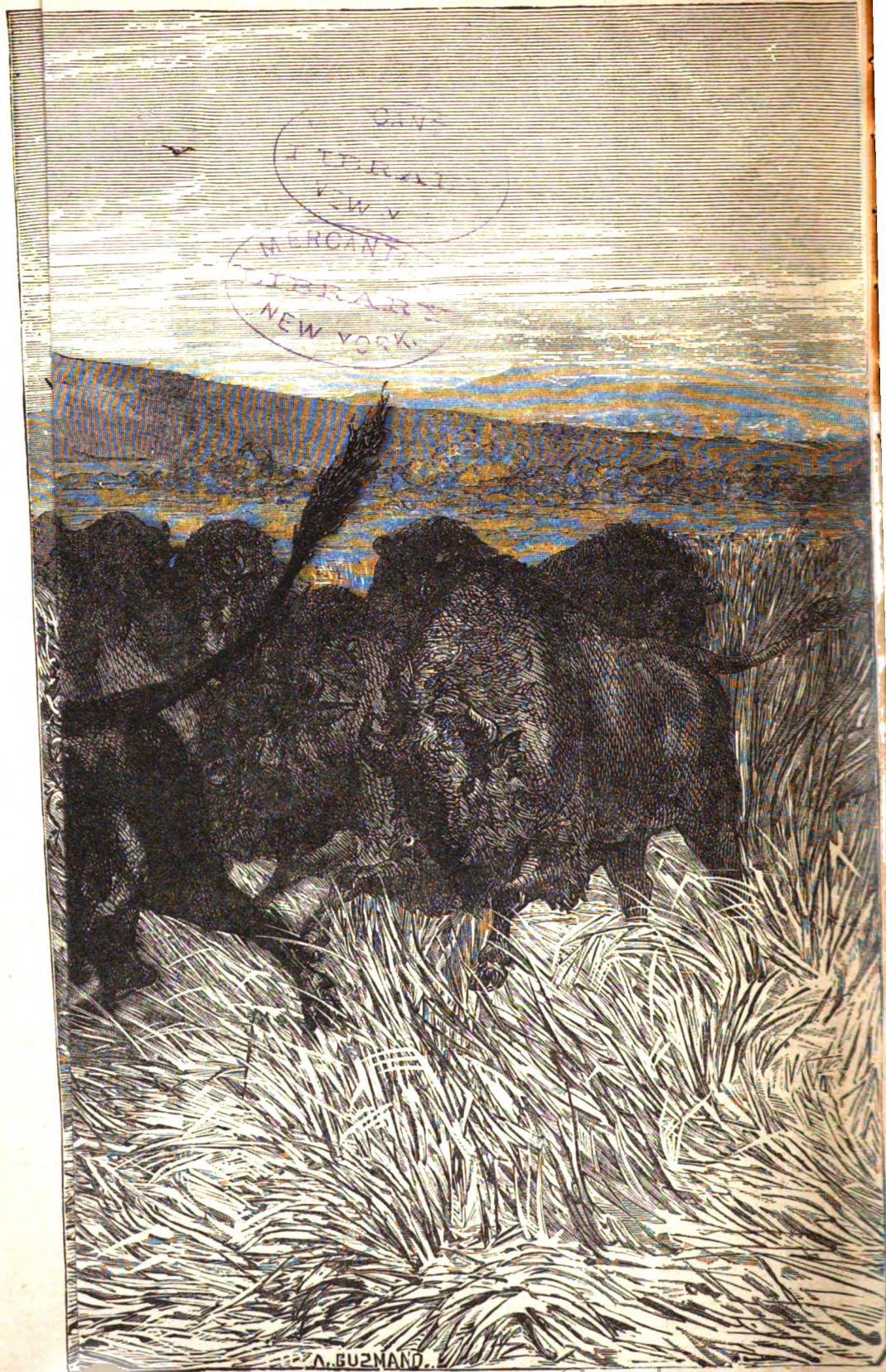
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The Spirit Gin.



IF people will blindfold their understanding, and believe in charlatans, they must take the consequences; *apropos* of which we give the following (for which we are indebted to a trans-Atlantic source) account of how the spirits work their miracles.

For about a year and a half past a Mrs. Hull, who lives in Portland, has had great celebrity as a "materializing medium"—that is, a person in whose presence the disembodied spirits of deceased mortals can, under certain conditions, assume the shape and appearance of their perished bodies.

The possession of so extraordinary a power naturally made her an object of interest, and she was greatly besought to display her talent to the outside world. But being of a very retiring disposition, she shunned the fame which had marked her for its own, and rarely gave audience to any but friends of the family, and those whom they, by special permission, were allowed to introduce. She had an aversion also to taking money from her visitors, but of late was rapidly overcoming this reluctance; and it came to be understood that ten dollars a *séance* was expected.

The method of proceeding was very like that generally employed on similar occasions, but had less appearance of dishonesty.

A triangular space was curtained off in one corner of a large parlour, of which the floor and walls were evidently free from deluding apparatus. The medium sat on a low stool in one angle of this space, and, to quiet scepticism, she allowed a portion of her skirt to project beneath the curtain, in which position it invariably remained unmoved throughout the performance. The light was turned almost out, the spectators ranged themselves in a line before the curtain, and the medium went into a trance.

As usual, an Indian spirit superintended the show, and communicated with the audience sometimes by raps, at others through the vocal organs of the unconscious Mrs. Hull.

In about twenty minutes, ghostly figures would appear at the central slit in the curtain. These were usually female forms, clothed in long, flowing white robes, and generally veiled. Very rarely, a male would appear, and once in a way a little child.

Figures often came out several feet into the room,

touched some of the spectators, allowed themselves to be fondled and caressed, brought flowers, and did other things indicative of intelligence and affection.

Sometimes the spirit would hold the curtain a little aside, and display the medium upon her cricket. Some of the audience could usually recognize the spirits as their departed friends.

Now, all these things were very startling to the average beholder, being quite unlike any ordinary tricks of jugglery; and accompanied, as they were, by copious explanations of the spiritualistic kind, they made a very decided impression upon the credulous people whom alone Mrs. Hull desired to have enter her haunted premises.

In September, 1875, Dr. Gerrish was present at one of the sittings, and failed to see the necessity of appealing to supernatural agencies to account for the phenomena observed. Being an invited guest, courtesy restrained his desire to investigate as he would have done at a mercenary exhibition; and, having been so indiscreet as to express his incredulity, he was for a long time unable to regain admission. On the 4th of August, 1876, however, a friend's entreaties obtained an invitation for him and Dr. Greene, and they at once began their investigations.

Profiting by the experience of the past, they allowed not a whisper of doubt to escape from their lips. What-ever appeared was greeted with ecstatic delight and open-mouthed amazement. The medium had never had more liberal, enthusiastic, and gullible admirers than they; and the materializations which they viewed were considered extraordinary, even by old *habitués* of the house.

On the 10th of the same month they were accompanied by Dr. George P. Bradley, of the United States navy; and on the 18th, Dr. Augustus S. Thayer was present.

Had these four gentlemen previously demonstrated the existence of the spirits of dead men, or had they even entertained the strongest belief in the possibility of spirit materialization, they could not have ignored the palpable evidences of fraud in which all these performances abounded. For instance, the dress of the medium, which was trim and neat about the upper part, bulged in a most unfashionable and suspicious way below the waist, leaving room for a whole magazine of clothes beneath.

Just after the beginning and before the close of the *séance*, there was rustling behind the curtain quite as prolonged as would be necessary for effecting a careful change of raiment.

An "Italian dancing girl's" spirit displayed feet and ankles which were clad as it was observed that Mrs. Hull's were before the sitting. Female figures only showed the full form, giving rise to the thought that the male bifurcated garment was difficult for spectres to manage.

The spirit of a person formerly well known to all present was so ridiculously unlike him that the liveliest imagination could see no resemblance.

A ghost sought recognition from her old surgeon by displaying a hand from which a finger was missing; but the amputation on the goblin did not correspond with that on her earthly prototype.

A spirit, which was said to be that of a Spaniard, did

not understand when addressed in her native tongue, but comprehended English perfectly.

The raps never were heard when a ghost was in sight, the opening in the curtain being some feet from the wall.

The superintendent Indian claimed to be of the Penobscot tribe, and only a few years out of the flesh; and yet she jabbered a lingo which has been obsolete for half a century, except among the aborigines of the dime novel.

But far more conclusive than all these circumstances was the distinct recognition of the peculiar features of Mrs. Hull in several of the faces which were seen.

The investigators permitted the performances to continue so long, simply because they desired to see to what extent the woman's unbridled audacity would display itself.

Soon wearying of the show, which was not as clever as it at first seemed, they laid their plans for the exposure of the trickery; and on the evening of the 22nd August the *dénouement* took place, in the presence of a select company of invited guests.

Each of the unbelievers had his part assigned, and no contingency could have arisen which was unprovided for. All were provided with inextinguishable fuses, and held them ready to strike if the light should be put out by Mr. Hull, who always sat by the lamp. If the medium should attempt one of her feats, her escape from exposure was impossible.

After waiting the usual time, there appeared a female draped in white and thickly veiled. It was a figure which had frequently come to commune with Dr. Greene, and promised to materialize at this time. At his request, couched in winning terms, she placed her hand in his, and was at once, in spite of vigorous resistance, drawn out into the room, unveiled, and found to be Mrs. Hull herself.

While this was going on, Dr. Gerrish had drawn the curtain aside, and discovered the unoccupied stool, the empty skirt, and a little pile of female wearing apparel.

It was exactly what was expected. The game of the impostor had been a bold one, but therein lay its greatest protection. So few safeguards against detection were employed, that almost everybody thought the medium must be honest; and no little indignation was excited among people otherwise very sensible at the suggestion of the possibility of deception on the part of so ingenious and high-toned a woman. Science, however, counts character for nothing; and when men accustomed to the rigid methods of practical medical investigation were admitted to the *séances*, then was the beginning of the end.

NEVER hurry. More men have died from getting out of breath than for any other reason.

AN UNHAPPY MAN.—“I had a friend who dressed himself in lady's clothes, and called upon a celebrated fortune-teller. She did not discover the disguise, but he heard what made him extremely unhappy.” Here the gentleman ceased. A lady, much interested, asked, “What did the fortune-teller say to him?” “Why,” said the gentleman, assuming a very grave aspect, “she told me I was to marry soon, and would become the mother of ten children!”

The Man in the Open Air.

HOW WE LOST AND RECOVERED THE FISHERY.

THE Willows, where we anglers used to meet, is half-way between either end of three miles of the stream—a snug, old-fashioned inn, the sort so seldom now to be met with, except in Norfolk and Suffolk.

It is, of course, close to the bridge, and has its large elm tree in front, its horse-trough beneath, a wide brick porch with seats, and a magpie in a wicker cage, which garrulous bird is everlastingly upsetting its food and water over any unlucky wight who stays for a moment beneath its prison. Through this porch you enter into a wide and somewhat lofty hall. In the centre of this is an oblong oaken table, of great width, upon which are sundry hieroglyphics and lines, deeply cut, for games of chance and skill only known to the natives, and the said fine piece of forest timber is grievously notched all round its margin by village Pugins, whose first lessons in dog-tooth Gothic are here recorded. Look beneath it, and you will see what lengths of hoop-iron have been deemed necessary to secure this huge slab of wood upon its supports, to meet those emergencies during harvest rejoicings when as many reapers as can cling together, with more reapers on their shoulders, surmount it to celebrate some rite, dedicated alike to Ceres and to Bacchus. But the fireplace! within whose lum eight men might sit with ease, and see the smoke travel straight up towards the pure blue sky, and hear the starlings talking to their young among the loose bricks at the top. That was the coveted resort when we came in from pike fishing in the winter, soddened and benumbed, and watched the mixing of the hot grog which was, as if by magic, to thaw our frozen nerves into gladness and rejoicing.

Our club consisted but of eight members active, and three passive or honorary. These three were residents in the village; and as soon as they were unanimously elected to the high distinction of type in the little book of rules we had ostentatiously printed, they ceased to fish the water of the club, excepting upon two days in the season, as they said, to keep up the charter.

This was a strange and unaccountable freak, but so they ordered it; and, after some little remonstrance, it was not for us to complain of so courteous an arrangement, conducive alike to the greater quietude and welfare of the fishery, and an example to the rest of the villagers.

But to balance the benefit we obtained by the denial of these three good-natured fellows—who in the long run, be it observed, did not lose anything by their condensation—there were three other residents who contrived to keep the club continually, if not in hot water, in a simmering state of anxiety as to the validity of its tenure, and the limits both of the water rented and the right of the owner to subject it to private uses.

However, like peaceful anglers, we took no notice of any little petty annoyances, which we knew were only intended to render a quarrel of sufficient magnitude to justify proceedings more pronounced; and we fished from season to season, in otherwise the greatest comfort and harmony with all around. Still, little skirmishes would now and then occur between our mem-

bers and this trio, which, by the by, was composed, it will be owned, of a formidable section of the village—the attorney, the apothecary, and a half-pay officer.

With law, physic, and ordnance against us, you will say, we were placed at somewhat long odds. Not so; we had the benefit of clergy in both vicar and curate—lovers, if not of angling, of anglers—the farmers to a man, and the peasantry, not forgetting the wives and children of the latter, with all of whom we had made friends in various ways. We had secured the favour of the two first by never fishing on the Sunday mornings; besides which, the nephew of the vicar was, although a non-resident, one of us; and we always took care that his creel should contain a brace of trout or so (for he was himself the veriest muff at a fly) when he went up to the vicarage to pay his respects to his uncle.

Now, I have said that little skirmishes did occasionally take place—not by the side of the stream, for neither Dr. Pills nor Mr. Fee was permitted there by the landowners, nor was even the captain welcome on the private land. It was in this kitchen or hall, and often beneath the lum itself, that the sparks of antagonism would show themselves, and right and title were fought, over and over again, with the same result—to find us, after years of discussion, still in possession of the water, and the same argument, why we should not be so, as fresh as ever.

But, reader, let me introduce the opposition.

I have a delightful sense of revenge, even at this remote period, in doing the assistant auctioneer's business with these three unique specimens of humanity, and, after cataloguing them, offering them to your appreciative consideration, in the hope that you will, at least, make the smallest bid, that I may figuratively have the pleasure of knocking them down.

I scarcely know which to submit to your notice first; for I should tell you that there were continually supplementary fights between the son of Mars and him of the red tape as to the privilege of precedence. The officer would declare that he went in the first rank, the lawyer that nothing precedes the law. The soldier would maintain that law had nothing to do with war. Then the lawyer would turn his flank, and, admitting this for a time, would demand to know how his adversary proved himself an officer; when the latter would unbutton his double-breasted coat, and produce his commission. Granted again, would the lawyer admit—

“But,” with a malicious and forensic grin, he would add—“but you are no longer a full, whole, and entire officer; you are only half of one, thus estimated by your Queen and your country; for if you were more than a segment, you would receive more than half-pay. Therefore, sir, whatever deference I might be disposed to extend to an officer and a gentleman, you cannot expect me, in fairness, to pay to only a moiety.”

The wrath of the soldier would then become terrible; but he was always wise enough to keep his hands off the law, and the attorney's victory was generally hailed by the auditors brought together by the skirmish with—

“Hurrah, six an' hater!”

But here am I describing these men's squabbles before I have even taken stock of their persons. Well, we shall get hold of the right end of the rod by and by.

The officer was a “haw-haw” sort of fellow—with a studied grim look, snappish as a spoiled puppy, dis-

putatious, egotistical, with sallow and wasted cheeks which sank in like the two sides of a fiddle, altogether arguing a liver sadly out of order. But what he wanted in side flesh was made up by an expansion, by contrast, of chin and forehead. Still, these concave jaws were always scrupulously well and closely shaven. How that was done sometimes puzzled me extremely.

The village barber, equally proud of thus surmounting difficulties, let me into the secret.

“I belong to a family,” observed the tonsor while lathering me, “who had followed this honourable profession for generations, and who have left behind them a name for some of the greatest discoveries in the wig business. My great grandfather used to tie up the queue of George the Third, and if by any accident the King was away, or my father was ill, his Majesty would not let anybody else meddle with that appendage; and I have heard my father say he has heard my grandfather tell how my great-grandfather used to come home from Court, after one of these long periods of neglect, and declare the ribbon had become so clogged with pomatum, powder, and dirt that it looked like a monkey's tail, and he could not find the folds. Well, sir, this inventive genius, I may call it, has descended to your humble servant; and as it would never have done for me to turn the captain out badly shaved, nor as a gentleman to have put my finger in his mouth, as I have to do with lantern-jawed yokels, I set my brains to work, night after night, without being able to hit upon any plan. Well, sir, one morning my little boy and girl was a-playing with a apple, and—it shows the genius is still running in the family—the boy, who had heard me speaking to his mother about this matter, all of a sudden splits the apple in halves, puts the two parts into his mouth, and, pushing with tongue one piece on this side, and t'other on that, cried out, ‘Look here, father, wouldn't this do for the captain?’ as sure as I am a living man. Well, ever since then, either the captain brings an apple with him, or I have one handy for him when he comes.”

To proceed, our captain was amongst those who maintained that whatever is wrong, and appeared never so delighted as when he mounted this hobby, and rushed headlong amongst those who desired to be contented and happy with things as they found them.

He was prim and pompous; prided himself on a black stock, and rather high shirt collar, which he was perpetually pulling up, as if to prove to the sceptical that it had an attachment to something more, whether all “dicky” or not. He prided himself, likewise, upon a small foot, the exhibition of which became more restricted as his boots were cobbled; and in summer weather he would sit himself on the stone coping of the bridge, swinging his legs listlessly to and fro, and, ogling every petticoat that passed, make some rude remark, in a loud whisper, as to the beauty of her face or neatness of her ankles.

The attorney was a duck-legged Welshman, overbearing in voice, and exceedingly mysterious when alluding to any absent person, who was then only Lord A. or B., or Mr. C. or D.; but always, whether lord or wealthy commoner, his client or his client's defendant.

He was the very prototype of Rondibilis, and could lay his nose to the trail of a law-suit for years before its consummation, and never lacked the perseverance and tact to hasten it. This the gentry in the neighbourhood

knew to their cost, or rather his, and many a lank purse or attenuated banker's balance could be traced direct to his handiwork.

The apothecary was a harmless, brainless fellow when not instigated to partizanship, fickle as the church vane after oiling. He roamed about the village, apparently without any object, with his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat, and would stop and gossip with any one by the hour, until he was fetched home by a slippered assistant, who would tell his master flatly that he was keeping good food waiting, as well as a better man's appetite. But, with all this simplicity of character, he was actually as dangerous as either of the two other men; for he had a mouth always open to swallow even the most outrageous story, and having mentally bolted it, he became perfectly restless until he had produced it again for the delectation of all and several who would care to accept the particulars—which, sooth to say, consisted of the whole village.

Now, this was just the state of things on one 1st of May, when I arrived at the Willows by the first train. After a cheery salute through the bar window to the landlady and her family, and an inquiry after mine host, I hastened to my locker to overhaul my tackle.

I recollected, while coming down, that I had for once neglected my customary precaution to well pepper my fly-books, and leave plenty of camphor on the shelves.

My anxiety was not without reason; two large books of well-assorted and most beautifully made flies were dust and ashes, the feathers and dubbing eaten by the moth-grub to the very steel.

My mortification was great, although I knew, as I had often lent and given away scores of flies before, there were those of our club who would place their stores at my disposal. It was no use crying over spilt milk.

But what does this mean? I turned, and found that all the lockers, of which there were some dozens in the room, were open, and all, as I looked into them one after another, empty.

I rang the bell; a comely daughter of the host appeared. I pointed to the open cupboard.

"Yes, sir," observed the girl, reading my question. "Don't you know? I wrote to you, sir, for father, as well as the other gentleman. Father has lost the water, or leastwise—but he will tell you, sir, when he comes in from the market."

I declare I never before experienced such a sense of disappointment and annoyance in all my life. It was not the deprivation of my sport, for of that I could have plenty far better elsewhere, but the loss of my excellent companions. Had death taken the little genial band at one fell swoop, I could not have been more concerned, more shocked, more inconsolable. There were fellows amongst them that I felt now I actually loved—all, I respected; and not one of them but for whom I would have made almost any sacrifice to prove my friendship.

"I will lay my life," thought I, "that wretched attorney is at the bottom of all this."

Sick to faintness at this bad and unexpected news, I became perfectly bewildered with anger and disappointment; not the less so from being alone, and having no one with whom I could share, or upon whom I could pour out, my indignation.

My first impulse was to go and beard the limb of the

law in his den. But prudence whispered caution, as a single unruly word dropped in the presence of his clerk would be picked up and put out to interest, which would grow into a formidable and awkward-looking document. No, I would see the vicar, or call upon one of the three honorary members, or have a glass of hot brandy and water, and wait the landlord's return.

The latter looked the more philanthropic course; so I sat myself down in the ingle—for it was the coldest of May days—and chewed the cud of the bitterest hatred against the cause of the dispersion of our little community.

My glass being finished, I sauntered out with a cigar—aromatic soother of wild passions!—towards the bridge. There I found the captain, walking up and down, in a foraging cap, a shooting coat, and a pair of hip boots. I endeavoured to cut him, but this he would not allow.

"Morning, Piscator," said he, with a military flourish of his hand—"do you join us?"

"In what?" I inquired, curtly.

"Why, don't you know, we are going to drag the water to-day to show our right? The attorney and two or three others will be here shortly. The boat is down yonder, and the nets ready. If you understand anything of the *modus operandi*, you will be more than welcome."

I make one of this despicable crew to despoil a water I had been for years, with my friends, so anxious to preserve! The insult was galling, whether intended or otherwise. I felt anything but amiable towards the warrior, whom I could have smashed with a blow. Choking with rage, and chagrined at the knowledge that I was showing it, I leaned over the stone parapet of the bridge, and gazed with fondness at the stream. As my eye followed its current, I saw the punt and hateful tackle to which the captain had alluded—in charge of whom? Could it be possible?—one of our honorary members!

My resolution was made. I turned round, to the no little surprise of the captain, and, with a forced appearance of willingness, told him that, as he and his friends did not appear to know much of the management of a net, with his full sanction, I would take that office upon myself. The captain was delighted—it was dirty work at the best. He had heard of people being drowned at that game, string getting round buttons, and all that sort of objectionable thing—Haw!

Having, as I could see, relieved the captain's mind from the prospect of hard work, with which he was quite unacquainted, I strolled down across the meadow to the punt. Before I had reached the bank, however, Toddles, our bow-man, came to meet and greet me heartily, assuring me that he had suffered from the infliction of the lawyer's acts most sorely; that, as he never expected to see any one of us again, he had gradually given way to the inexorable, and, like a neighbour, willing to be at peace with all around, had consented, as knowing something of the river, to become the pilot of the party in this their first raid upon the waters.

Assured that this man was not altogether a willing participator in the operations, I had no hesitation in telling him my plans, in which he cheerfully agreed to join. He, indeed, was pleased with the flavour of mischief which might be inflicted upon the chief movers

in the despoiling of the river which my scheme shadowed forth. Presently we saw the captain joined on the bridge by old Fee, and the weak-brained wielder of the pestle; and after a consultation, the subject of which I naturally imagined to be myself, they shouted (not being permitted to trespass on the meads) for the punt to be brought to the foot of the bridge; and followed by the ostler of the Willows, carrying a small hamper, they were already awaiting us when the punt approached the spot.

Both the new-comers offered their hands to me to shake; but had I been disposed to enact this piece of hypocrisy, it was spared me, as I held the wet punt pole with both hands to steady the craft, as the precious crew stumbled in, in a fashion which showed their little acquaintance with river pursuits.

I was now asked where we should begin operations; but I, with an air of well-dissembled deference to the lawyer, pointed out that he, being the superior in every respect, should take command of the expedition, and I should be too happy, for one, to comply with his wishes.

Law was posed for once. He was flattered by the distinction, and by being placed above his military friend, who in this instance allowed the claim to stand without contention.

"In this case," observed the lawyer, with an air of condescension, "I look upon you as a judge, and to you I appeal for instruction and advice. Where, sir, shall we open the proceedings?"

I suggested, to be in perfect order, he should first read his authority for the step he was about to take.

This being done, the document was restored to the crown of his hat, as it might be challenged by the riparian owners as we passed their land.

I then suggested we should begin at the top of the water, at the flour mill weir tail, and work down. This, being a mile and a half against stream, would not be a bad beginning for my line of strategy.

The punting was, however, a task they had neither anticipated nor provided for. It had seemed easy enough—indeed, quite a facile, if not graceful, amusement to the captain from the bridge, as he had often observed the skilful members of our club glide about as if the punt moved at the will of its occupier, without effort or fatigue.

Toddles was the only one, besides myself, thus endowed; and as for the other three, two of them did not know how to sit properly in a punt, much more to steer it. They held on to the sides, and caught their breath at every wobble or lurch; and the worst of all was the lawyer, whose occasional earnest inquiries about the depth of the water beneath were, however carelessly put, very suggestive.

The captain appealed to the honorary member's experience.

Toddles had got his cue. His physical resources, like mine, were to be husbanded for the more laborious duties of the net.

So the captain, throwing off his shooting coat, took the punt pole, and placing his whole force and weight upon it, sent the craft diagonally across the stream, striking against the bank with such a thud as to cause old Fee to clutch the lid of the well with both hands—which, however, giving way, let him fall backwards, with his legs in the air.

The doctor laughed until he held his sides.

All properly seated again, our military Charon, in changing the pole from one side to the other, struck the doctor on the head, which knocked his hat into the river, and turned his smiles into tears. I could see that Toddles enjoyed the situation immensely.

After half an hour's attempt to head the stream, we had advanced but a quarter of a mile, during which every bend and corner of it had been visited in the zig-zag course of the punt—here jibbing like a wild colt in the set of the stream, and now fairly curveting round in the eddies, until a mud bank was reached, when the pole, suddenly sinking to the very top in the soft soil, nearly carried the captain overboard, which it would have done had he not let go; and lo! the craft was adrift.

In this dilemma, I suggested that the broad-brimmed hat of old Fee would make a good paddle, and extricate us from the difficulty.

Upon this, the half-witted Pills—perhaps the more instigated by reason of his own hat being saturated—seized the chaplain from the head of his friend, and at the first dip the stream entering it forced it out of his hand. But, as it did not suit my purpose to have the expedition wrecked before we got to the weir, I caught at the hat as it floated past me, and restored it dripping wet—as was Pills—to its owner. I then, as the craft touched the bank, sprang out with the painter, and dragging the crew above the imperilled pole, let them again drift down, and recovered it. Then, taking myself the adventure in hand, we arrived in due time at the weir.

Here the net was properly paid out below the pool, the deeps well beaten, and when the time arrived for hauling in, all was intense excitement, for the bungs were bobbing and dancing up and down most furiously—the sure index of a full and heavy take.

The captain, from the bank, kept the net close up, while Fee and Pills, laying hold of the guide rope, pulled with right good will at the other end. But not an inch could they move it—proof, I told them, of the miraculous draught of fish which awaited us.

The miller and his men, attracted by the commotion, came to witness the operations, and then, at once detecting the state of things, roared heartily at the futile attempts to get in the net.

Dear brother angler, the meshes were irretrievably entangled amongst the tenter-hooks and posts purposely driven to prevent such unsportsmanlike proceedings; and finally, to save any portion of the net, it had to be cut and mangled in an inglorious manner.

The lawyer's chagrin knew no outlet but curses; for the loss of seven pounds, deposited with the owner as the value of it when he borrowed the net, stared him in the face. Added to this, the miller, after he had enjoyed the scene, retired into his house, and again emerged with a notice of action for trespass against the trio, who found, when too late, that they had exceeded the bounds of the fishery by several yards, the club's permission to angle there being an act of courtesy.

"The best plan," suggested the sensible and good-natured miller, "you can adopt, gentlemen, is to leave the water alone. It's a living to the good people at the Willows, it gives pleasure to the gentlemen of the club, and there is not a farmer along the banks but what you have converted into an enemy by driving away

the anglers, all of whom we were ever glad to welcome down, to give a little life to our dull old village."

No; the lawyer, enraged at everything, was inexorable; and searching for the parchment to compare notes as to the boundaries, that precious document was gone—gone when the hat took its bath, to soak and perish at the bottom of the stream.

A conference with the good vicar that evening ended in telegraphing to each member the state of affairs, and four days afterwards saw our little coterie reassembled to a man at the Willows, to resume our sport, which has not been again interrupted.

Through a Tantrum.

A BRISK autumn morning, as far as the people go; but the air is hot with the heat of summer, the leaves are turning yellow, and falling; but they fall slowly, with the sluggish air of being too lazy to move, even wither—are damp and heavy with the steamy moisture that has been deposited upon them in a pearly dew, that glistens, and sparkles, and sheds forth iridescent rays that would put to the blush anything shown by Mr. Frank Flower by lime-light opposite the Criterion, in the way of gems, or in any other jeweller's shop in what Nelly Farren styles "the great metrollypus." The very cobwebs tied from strand to strand are strung with pearls, diamonds, rubies, emeralds, amethysts, sapphires, and the topaz; but, unfortunately, when you would gather them they vanish into moisture. All the same, one declares it to be a glorious autumn morning.

It is not a very long ride to Croydon, but it is not an easy one at steeplechase times. There is a good deal of the rush-for-the-seat style of crowd at the station, and habits practised going to the Derby seem rife. For instance, you may pay for a first-class seat, and by the pleasant wheel of fortune chance-work find that you are awarded a very small portion of a third-class carriage; while 'Arry, who meant—of course meant—to go third-class (for did he not pay for his ticket?), finds himself snugly seated in a first.

That train journey is not pleasant, for the exigencies of the day are forced upon people most unpleasantly. Opposite to me sat a very demure, High Church curate, in spectacles, who was terribly scandalised and justly annoyed at the proceedings of a stout cad, in a long, striped Ulster, and a sporting individual in bird's-eye fogle, horsey-cut coat, and check knickerbockers. These racecourse *habitués*, who can be seen repeated a thousand times at every meeting, were disputing over some bet across the reverend gentleman, who exhibited a meekness that won my respect, for he bore it all most patiently; what time the seediest blackguard that ever wore a battered grey hat, and looked the antithesis of respectability, filled up the window with his back to the door, smoked the rankest of bad cigars, and helped a keen-looking coachman to poison the poisoned air—albeit this was not a smoking carriage.

"Jump in, sir, room for six more," shouted the driver of a dejected-looking horse, all bent knees, bones, and blinkers—one of many that seemed to have come direct to Norwood Junction from Brighton for the race week. It was the regular meditative Brighton breed—one of those staggering hacks that lean up against their

collars, and lift up their legs, when the weight of their bodies moves the vehicle along. You may see them by the score in the King's-road, waiting with their drivers for passengers to the Devil's Dyke and back, and seeming by their aspect to say that, however good the sea air may be for the human biped, four legs flourish to their sorrow.

"Jump in, sir, room for six more," shouted a driver.

But in utter dread lest I should be seized by some member of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, anent the state of that horse, I elected to walk, and walked, getting the peep of nature herebefore described.

Who does not know the regular suburban meeting, with its grand and past grand stands; its seats to let, its refreshment booths, its fenced enclosures, flagged-out course, with the jumps, hedge, ditch, and water; its turfy runs; its plough pieces; its trees heavy with human fruit, and its clusters at comprehensive corners where a good view of an accident can be obtained? Many of the features are repeated here *ad infinitum*, and at every turn some picture is presented ready for the artist's sketch-book, or the note-book of the notifying writer.

I love a racecourse, whether it be the even sward, or hurdle, or steeplechase; for there do congregate one's species in a variety of forms. You meet the straightforward, honest lover of sport—the man who goes to a race for that race's sake—the man who takes pride in horses and their emulative strife; and you meet there, too, the shabby-looking individual who helps with his kin to block up Fleet-street, when the telegram relating to some race which he cannot attend is expected to be exhibited outside the office of some sporting print. He is shabby, always was shabby, and in all human probability always will be shabby. He is a fair specimen of the type of man who will not work, but expects to get rich by some sudden stroke of fortune; but, alas for him, the stroke that falls, though it may be sudden, is of another kind to that which he expected.

But of all the individuals present at a racecourse, none makes so much noise, or is so loud in every sense of the term, as the professional betting man. You are progressing slowly through the crowd, when a Babel of yelling assaults your ears, amidst which you plainly distinguish the words—"I'll lay against the field, bar one;" and in a short time you are abreast of the loud individual, who advertises himself by his appearance. He wears the loudest beard, the loudest hat, with the loudest band, the loudest Ulster and leggings, stands upon a loud Harlequin box, and has, stuck tent-fashion in the earth, the loudest of umbrellas—not a Gamp, but a huge, tented, chaise-pattern style of rain defender; and either under or beside this shouts and storms, like a priest of Plutus admonishing his hearers, the mighty betting man; while he rattles coin loudly in the loud bag slung at his waist. There are gentlemen of this kidney who, to attest their respectability, and to urge on the public to confide their cash with them, wear their names blazoned in bands upon their hats; and there are others who have a nasty knack of disappearing when a race adverse to their arrangements has been run. Unkind terms have been invented for certain of these gentry, who have been known to depart from the course covered with mud and bruises, and with their loud costume demolished to

such an extent, that the tailor who built it up would not know the "thing of shreds and patches" presented to his view. For the term "welcher" is an abhorred one in an English race-crowd; and let the cry be raised, it excites a fiery ire in the breasts of a tag-rag and bob-tail mob who never bet a shilling in their lives, but are virtuous over such matters to the last degree, and invari-



ably feel themselves called upon to execute unwritten law upon the offender.

Strolling on, one comes, over and over again, to the Hansom turn-out, whose occupants are a couple of gaily-dressed damsels, brought down by some one who thinks this is fast life and "spicy;" who drapes himself in an Ulster, carries a race-glass slung over his shoulder, smokes bad strong cigars, and considers that he has attained the height of fashionable dissipation by "standing" champagne—said champagne being an atrocious acidulated compound, which creams in the glass even as does the far more wholesome ginger beer, which is vended by dames in stone bottles at the low price of one penny and three halfpence.

Do you wish to shoot for nuts? You can, and may-be get "forty in the bull's-eye." Do you wish to have three throws for a penny at indigestible cocoa-nuts? You can do it here as easily as at the Derby. You can also try to puzzle out the three-card trick; see the fat woman; wonder how the purse trick is managed; and be tempted, if you like, by the clever sharpers to buy for two shillings a portmonnaie containing a florin, half a crown, a shilling, and sixpence. You may buy this purse, and find within coppers in place of silver, and then acknowledge that the trick was most cleverly performed. Better far, however, is it to come and have

a look at the horses, trained and groomed to perfection; so hey for the saddling paddock, where we are just in time to see the favourite for the next race.

Here she comes, already mounted by her keen, sharp-featured, wiry-looking jockey—one of the few wearers of a scrap of mutton chop whisker, natty in his neat leathers and light top boots, white satin jacket, with a band of scarlet from shoulder to hip, and his closely-fitting racing cap of black velvet, tied with a gold cord. Our friend looks like winning, and he has apparently grown into his saddle. But his mount.

Well, yes, she looks like winning, too—if. She has speed in those iron-nerved, greyhound-like limbs, and the quivering muscles of the long, lithe form tell how she can stretch out, *ventre à terre*, as the French say, in some open run, and skim over hedge or fence like a swallow. Her skin shines like the satin of her rider's jacket, and plays over a network of veins that tell of breed. Win?—yes, there's not a doubt of it. The favourite will win *if*—I repeat it—if she likes. For look at her as she goes through the crowd of admiring *cognoscenti*, patted and caressed by her rider, who holds the reins with a hand which seems to be manipulating cobweb instead of the finest leather that ever emanated from the house of Wilkinson or Cuff. Her



eyes roll about unpleasantly, and those nervous ears twitch and play a variety of capers, from the straight-forward cock to the sly lie down backwards, which betoken a shrill squeal, and then beware of her heels. But we shall see.

As at the Agricultural Hall, so here, the favourite spot with spectators is at the water jump—of course, from motives of philanthropy; and, being as philan-

thropic as my neighbours, I get as elevated a place as I can, and watch for the result.



The bell is ringing, and, kaleidoscope-like in colours, the eight starters for the next race are cantered along



the straight run previous to making for the starting

post, and then, glass to eye, one watches the getting off. Three failures, and then away they go, all pretty

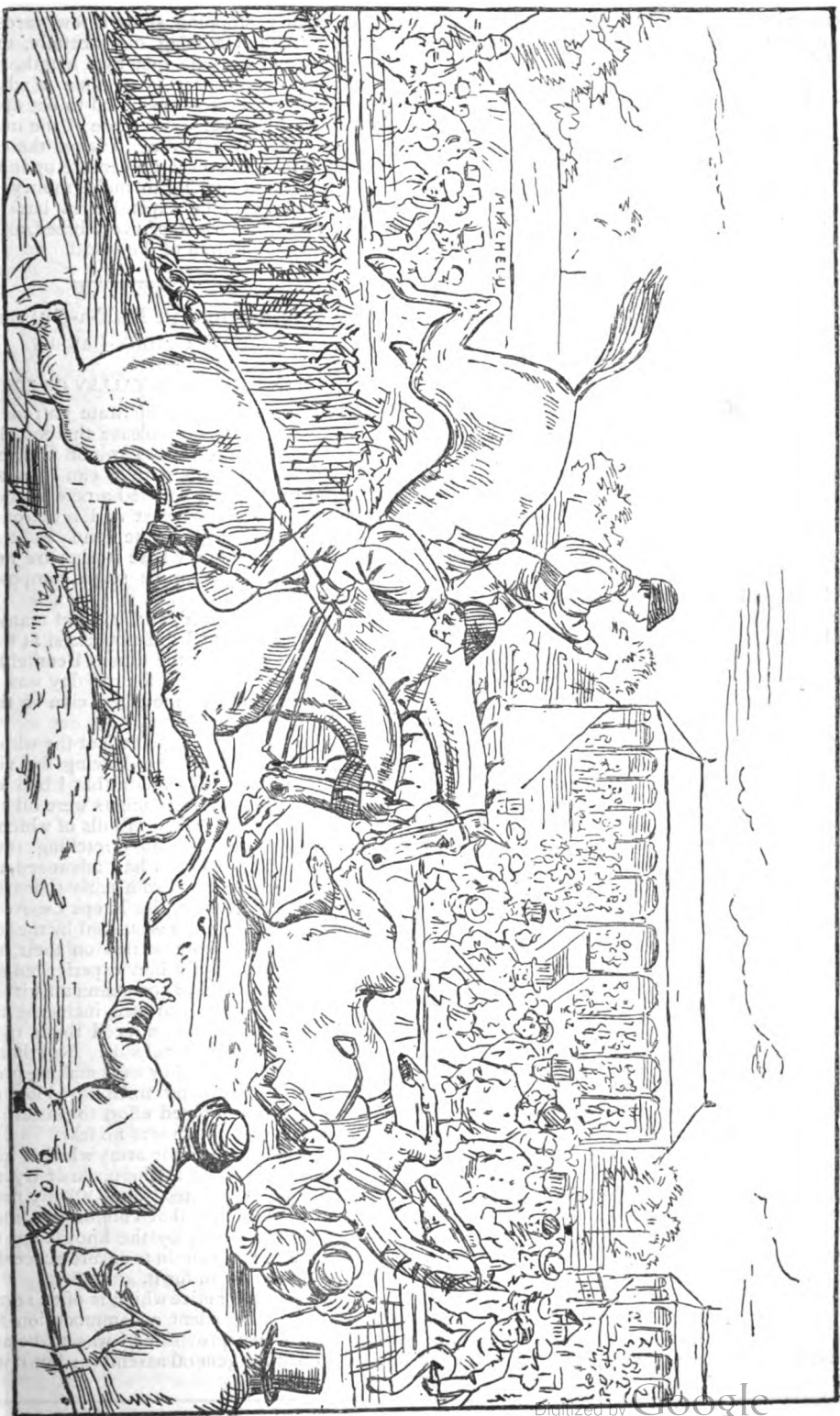


well together; and up and down, up and down, all go over the first hedge with ease, canter onward, and go



over the next without a failure. No such good luck

awaits them at the next, for here a bright-looking bay stops dead, and remains on one side while her excited jockey goes over without her, and, as I hear afterwards, has a very narrow escape of being trampled on by the succeeding horses. The rider of the third horse over is also unfortunate, for the rider breaks his stirrup strap and pulls up—out of the race.



Meanwhile the other six gallop on, taking their leaps well, till one falls in landing on the other side of an ugly fence, gets bogged with his hind legs in the ditch, and his rider ignominiously crawls over his head, and stands ruefully looking at him. Five in the race now, and they pass out of sight. There are some high up who can follow them still with their race-glasses, but I am not of them;

and I direct my longing gaze to the flags which mark out the reappearing point, and patiently await the coming of the horses, wondering how the favourite will show up.

I have not long to wait; for there is a buzzing cry of "Here they come!" and in the distance I can see four horses bounding on—one more has evidently come to grief. Is it the favourite? No; there she is—last, with her white-jacketed rider sitting well down to his work.

Four only, and—no—yes—on the other side of that hedge another is out of it, refusing the hedge, and standing, backing, and rearing, wagging its tail; while its rider flogs and flogs in vain. Number four has had enough of it, and the three survivors are a hundred yards ahead, and will soon be two.

It is plain enough now that the three mean mischief, and that there is not a jockey there who has not made up his mind to win—three of them, the white and scarlet of the favourite, the purple of a horse blindfolded on one side, and the amber of a huge grey that I remember thinking an ugly customer as he was cantered by. On they come, all abreast, and they clear an ugly ditch easily. On still, and they scramble over a bank with a hedge on the top; and now, glancing right and left, they race forward, nearer and nearer for the water jump, and the straight run in for the winning post.

It must be a cool hand who does not get excited now, as the three beautiful creatures gallop on, their riders with heads down, silks filled out balloon-fashion, and, if one could but see it, a grim look of determination on their faces, as they look straight ahead at the hurdle fence which screens the water jump from their view; for they know that the horse that fails now is lost—irretrievably lost—and it is an ugly leap that, over the fence and ditch.

On they come, and a roar of excitement rises from the crowd. "Yellow wins—yellow wins!" and so it seems; for a hundred yards before they reach the fence, the amber-jacketed rider gives the great grey his head, and he dashes a length ahead of his competitors, but rushes too savagely at the fence—clears it, though, in gallant style; but the stride is not long enough to take him over ditch as well, for his hind legs catch the edge, and in a moment, with a heavy thud, he falls, rolls over sidewise, sending his rider clear, and then lies helplessly kicking and plunging on his flank.

Purple, with the blind eye, is over next; but he too leaps short, and comes down with a mighty splash, hind legs in the water; while, last of all, and with her rider motionless and steady in the saddle, over comes the favourite easily and clean; and, amidst a storm of cheers, gathers herself up for the run in. The race seems already won, but purple is of the *nil desperandum* breed; he is a little, cocky-looking man, and, leaning forward, he helps his horse well out of his difficulties, and, a couple of lengths behind, gamely follows to make as good a second as he can.

Nil desperandum is a good motto, and my own, if it were not out of place. Only a hundred yards from home, and the race is the favourite's own—for purple is now a length behind; when an incautious touch of whip or spur, in a moment of excitement perhaps, from a desire to increase the distance, has done the mischief. The favourite lays back her ears, goes into a gallop, and

ends by nearly stopping short a few yards from the winning post, and kicking disgracefully, until purple has shot by and won the race by a length.

For your steeplechase is a game of chance, good lovers of sports and pastimes, and to bet upon success seems to your humble servant one of the most hazardous of hazards. At all events, I leave the course fully determined that, if ever I do venture upon this highly speculative plan of trying to make money, the cash I possess shall never be expended in backing the favourite—since favourites, of every breed, are too often but the spoiled children of the world.

Wanderings in Half-a-Guinea.

BY MAJOR MONK-LAUSEN.

CHAPTER XXII.—THE VALLEY OF ECHOES.

IF musicians are worthy of State patronage in Europe, where they only please the ears, how much more must they deserve recognition and encouragement in a country where they can also satisfy the cravings of hunger? I decreed a new feather order at once, and adorned the waist and brow of Wachnah with the snowy plumage of the swan. The swan, true musician of the Future, whose strains are never heard in the present; an example some composers might advantageously follow.

Wachnah was pleased, and brought many other big serpents to camp; but I did not assist at the capture, being too busy to spare the time. I contented myself with dining off the meat; for the day was approaching for the gathering of the Krep clan on the plain of Asor.

It may seem rash thus to collect the whole of their fighting power in one place, leaving the villages defenceless; so I wish to explain that I had learned, by scouts, that the Krall settlements were all situated on the farther side of the chain of hills of which Asor was the highest, in the country stretching towards the opposite coast from which I had advanced, and where Howdow was situated. From early times the Kralls had been Trans-Asorian, the Kreps Cis-Asorian; but after the decisive reverses sustained by the latter, their conquerors had partially settled on their side. The repulse which the Kralls had experienced on the late occasion of their attack, accompanied as it was by the blowing up of so many warriors, including their chief, the redoubted Krakrane, induced them to withdraw entirely to their own original side. Not that they were cowed; on the contrary, they were making preparations for an attack in force, determined not to lose their prestige without one combined effort to retrieve it; but of desultory incursions there was no fear.

Accompanied by the little army which I had trained and equipped, I arrived at the place of tryst two days before the time appointed; and, all my preparations being now made, I felt that comfortable sensation of repose which is induced by the knowledge that there is nothing more you can do to ensure success, and, win or lose, you are now in for it.

The inhospitable notice which is often seen in suburban England, "Excellent accommodation for parties bringing their own provisions," was to be adopted on the occasion of the general assembly; but it went much

against my grain to promulgate it; and directly we arrived, I directed Piti—who had brought a band of women, formed into a rude sort of ambulance corps, which I had entrusted to her management—to set them all to work at making palm wine after her own receipt, to the most copious extent feasible.

If I were to be elected king, it was desirable that my inauguration should not be a dry one.

I do not believe in the durability of the loyalty which has no tap root.

Pardon the atrocity of the sentiment, good Sir Wilfrid, for the sake of the pun. I think I have been informed that you like puns.

Pardon the atrocity of the pun, grave Scotchmen, for the excellence of the sentiment. I have heard that the flavour of whiskey is pleasing to you.

We arrived an hour before mid-day, and when our bivouac had been arranged, on the verge of the wood and in the immediate neighbourhood of water, I shouldered my rifle and set out, accompanied by Peter Tromp and my ordinary sporting attendants, to see if I could shoot anything for dinner, and at the same time to explore the ground and take note of the most favourable spot for the approaching gathering. I found this on a spur of the mountain some five miles off, at a different point of approach from that which I had taken on the occasion of the ascent, and where the slope was much easier and more gentle.

We then pursued our course, skirting the mountain-side till we came to a ravine, which we penetrated, as it was a likely-looking place for a bear; and, after pursuing its tortuous course for about a mile, came out into a basin surrounded on all sides but that on which we had entered by steep and, in many places, precipitous rocks. In one part a waterfall—by far the finest I had as yet seen in the country—leaped over a lofty ledge, and fell in spray into a pool, out of which there ran trickling through the bright green meadowland a small but clear stream in which trout were a certainty.

I took all this in at the first glance; at the second my heart bounded with joy and hope, as I became aware of the presence of a large herd of buffalo, feeding quietly in the midst of the plain.

They were in a trap. I was bound to get a shot. It was true that, though cut off from the cleft in the hill-side by which we had come, there was a place at the far end not utterly impracticable for buffalo to scramble up. But they would not be able to go fast, and a far worse shot than I am might reckon confidently on three or four head.

Not far from the spot where we emerged on this open basin, there were a number of upright stones or slabs of rock; whether a freak of Nature, if there is such a thing, or arranged by a former race of men, or carried there and planted by a glacier, I don't know. They were like large gravestones, and stood in a clump on the plain, close together. As there was no other cover visible, I made for these, and our whole party was easily concealed amongst them.

The buffalo, who were feeding about three hundred yards off, did not notice our presence. Resting my rifle on a ledge of stone, I took a steady aim at the shoulder of a fine bull, and pressed the trigger. The buffalo fell to his knees, but quickly rose again. I did not give him the second barrel, however, since I was sure of him without that, and bullets were valuable.

Although sound animals might scramble out of the basin by the rough slope mentioned above, I felt certain that the obstacles were too many and serious for a wounded beast to surmount; and I fired quickly at another, anxious to bag what I could before the herd stampeded for the possible exit.

But a curious phenomenon kept them stationary. The rocky basin was surrounded with echoes of the most perfect kind, and I was myself startled by the tremendous fusillade which followed the report of my shots. As for Peter Tromp, he thought that we had thrust ourselves into a Krall ambush somehow, and showed unmistakable signs of nervousness.

The poor buffaloes did not know in which direction to turn for safety, or from what quarter the bullets came. There was no smoke to guide them, for I was using gun-cotton; and the reports rolled around them incessantly.

I had six of them stretched on the plain, and four others severely wounded, though still standing, before there was any general movement amongst the body. Then, urged by a simultaneous impulse, they commenced careering round and round, seeking an opening for escape, but headed back perpetually by the reverberations, which startled them at every point. For, as they circled about, I fired as fast as I could load, and when they came near, my men also got shots; so that the enclosure was speedily strewn with dead, dying, and wounded buffaloes, the latter being in a most vicious frame of mind when able to get up again.

At length a pugnacious old bull caught sight of Coger as he fired from behind his stone, and, lowering his head with a bellow which was echoed back till it sounded like one chorused roar of defiance from all the herds of Spain, he dashed at him. Quick as thought, Coger got his foot on one projection, caught another with his hand, and sprang to the top of the boulder. The buffalo, unable to check his course—if, indeed, he wished to do so—hurled himself against the granite just two feet below the man's legs, causing the massive block to shake and reel again, and his own bullet-proof head to crush up like an opera hat.

As the rest of the herd were following in a more deliberate and dangerous manner, we each adopted Coger's plan, and clambered up the lower stones, from which we continued to shoot down the animals, at a short range which caused every bullet to tell.

The efforts made by the survivors to get at us were surprising; not only did they rear on end, and try to scramble up the perpendicular sides, but two of them actually combined to scale my particular rock, one of them placing himself close underneath it, while the other mounted on his back.

I was reloading my rifle at the time; and my first intimation of the bold attempt was afforded me by feeling the hot breath of the creature on my face, and seeing his fore-hoofs over the ledge, while with one of his horns he nearly poked my left eye out. If I had not drawn my hunting-knife, and plunged it into his spine, rolling him back as dead as the ox whose loin was first knighted, I verily believe he would have been "king of the castle," and the present narrator worked up with horns and hoofs into a condition fit for nothing but sausages.

To make a long story short, we bagged the entire herd, and used up our ammunition to the last bullet.

Then, making the best of our way home, I gave orders for an immediate shifting of the camp to the other side of the plain, at the place I had marked out as the best for the general assembly.

As this was quite close to the cleft in the mountain which led to the valley of echoes, the work of retrieving the beef was rendered comparatively simple, though the collection of so large a number of carcasses occupied our whole party the remainder of that evening, and all next day. Nor was it a slight matter to cook the meat in the required quantities; but under Peter Tromp's management this was accomplished, and any stranger approaching the field kitchens would have thought that a burning village lay before him.

So that when the Krep tribe assembled, there was such a feast prepared as they had never dreamed of; and one ardent and unanimous desire pervaded the multitude to get the business of the meeting over as soon as possible, and settle down to the Homeric banquet. This frame of mind I noticed with satisfaction, as it was likely to cut short that palaver which is the great bane of all popular gatherings.

I meant to take the reins of government in my hand, and I had a military force at my disposal, and enthusiastically in my interest, which could at once carry out my intentions. So what was the use of a lot of speechifying and discussion?

Motive Power of Light.

IN a lecture on this subject, delivered at the Royal Institution, Mr. Crookes said that all the physical forces render their action perceptible by the production of motion; but that light had never been directly converted into mechanical motion until the experiments had been devised which he had to bring forward that evening. Once, in attempting to weigh bodies in an approximately perfect vacuum, he witnessed anomalies for which he could not account, but upon which information had been thrown by his more recent discoveries. He found, as published some time ago, that the light of a candle would attract an arm of pith suspended in an imperfect vacuum, but repel a similar arm suspended in the very perfect vacuum obtainable only by the aid of the Sprengel pump.

Of this pump he exhibited a most perfect and improved specimen, so perfect that it would produce a vacuum through which the electric spark would not pass. In all his experiments he had been indebted, to a very great extent, to the industry and marvellous powers of glass-blowing possessed by his assistant, Mr. C. Gillingham. He then proceeded to describe the construction of his "radiometer," in which pith discs, at the ends of glass arms balanced on a pivot, were made to spin round rapidly under the influence of light.

Next he explained that this propelling force of light was not so weak as he had once supposed. Instead of radiometers in which all the moving parts weighed sometimes as little as a quarter of a grain, he found that he could make the instruments to carry little iron magnets; and he exhibited one in which ten discs of pith were required to carry round one magnet. Outside the bulb of this instrument was a magnetic arm, which was attracted every time one pole of the magnet inside

the bulb came near it, and the consequent "bowings" of the magnet outside were made to convey electrical impulses to a Morse telegraphic instrument, whereby a series of dots was made upon a slip of paper, and the more rapid the rotation inside the bulb the closer together were the dots. Thus his radiometers had been made self-registering, and suitable for meteorological purposes.

He also pointed out that no good photometer had ever been made, and he exhibited apparatus infinitely more exact for measuring the illuminating power of gas, or any kind of light, than those founded upon the supposed unvarying illuminating power of the very untrustworthy "standard candle."

After many experiments, magnified and projected on the screen by the aid of the electric lamp, he exhibited one of his latest, in which he directly measured the mechanical force of the impact of light, not its weight, for the experiments did not remove light from the class of imponderables. By means of the force of torsion of a filament of glass, brought into play against an iron weight of one-hundredth of a grain, all *in vacuo*, he could so adjust a mirror to a zero point that it would move when parts of the apparatus were submitted to the action of light; thus, he proved that the push of a candle six inches off amounted to '00162 grain.

By calculation he estimated that the pressure of sunlight on the earth was not less than two cwt. per acre, fifty-seven tons to the square mile, and 3,000 millions of tons upon the whole earth—all this power acting in opposition to the force of gravitation. In conclusion, he said that all the results he had exhibited had been obtained in consequence of his examination of an anomaly contrary to all ordinary experience. Anomalies were of the utmost value to men of science; they were gateways leading to new researches, and to the establishment of reputations.

Charles Young, the Tragedian.

ONE of the noblest tragedians on the stage, and a perfect gentleman in private society, Young was an irrepressible *farceur*, constantly playing, with imperturbable gravity, the most whimsical pranks in public.

He undertook to drive Charles Mathews (*fils*) to Cassiobury, on a visit to the Earl of Essex. Having passed through a turnpike, and paid the toll, he pulled up at the next gate he came to, and, addressing himself most politely to a woman who issued from the toll-house, inquired if Mr. —, the toll-taker, whose name he saw on a board above the door, happened to be in the way. The woman answered that he was not in the house, but she would send for him, if the gentleman wished to see him particularly.

"Well, I'm sorry to trouble you, madam, but I certainly should like to have a few minutes' conversation with him," rejoined Young.

Upon which the woman called to a little boy—

"Tommy! run and tell your father a gentleman wants to speak to him."

Away ran Tommy, down a straight, long path in the grounds of a nursery and seedsman. The entrance was close to the turnpike—Young sitting bolt upright on the tilbury, solemn and silent, to the astonishment

of Mathews, who asked him what on earth he wanted with the man.

"I want to consult him on a matter of business," was the reply.

After some five or six minutes, the boy, who had entered a building at the extreme end of the path, re-appeared, followed by a man putting on a jacket as he walked, and in due time both of them stood beside the tilbury.

The man touched his hat to Young.

"You wished to see me, sir?"

"Are you Mr. —?"

"Yes, sir."

"The Mr. — who is entrusted to take the toll at this gate?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then you are precisely the person who can give me the information I require. You see, Mr. —, I paid sixpence at the gate at —, and the man who took it gave me this little bit of paper" (producing a ticket from his waistcoat pocket), "and assured me that if I showed it to the proper authorities at this gate, I should be allowed to drive through without payment."

"Why, of course," said the man, staring with amazement at Young. "That ticket clears this gate."

"Then you do not require me to pay anything here?"

"No. Why, any fool—"

"My dear Mr. —, I'm so much obliged to you. I should have been so sorry to have done anything wrong, and therefore wished to have your opinion on the subject. A thousand thanks. Good morning, Mr. —."

And on drove Young, followed, as the reader may easily imagine, by a volley of imprecations and epithets of anything but a flattering description, so long as he was within hearing.—*Planché.*

A FARMER gathers what he sows, a seamstress sews what she gathers.

SINGULAR PROPERTY OF TOMATO LEAVES.—"I planted a peach orchard," writes M. Siroy, of the Society of Horticulture, Valparaiso, "and the trees grew well and strongly. They had but just commenced to bud when they were invaded by the curculio (*pulgón*), which insects were followed, as frequently happens, by ants. Having cut some tomatoes, the idea occurred to me that, by placing some of the leaves around the trunks and branches of the peach trees, I might preserve them from the rays of the sun, which were very powerful. My surprise was great, upon the following day, to find the trees entirely free from their enemies, not one remaining, except here and there, where a curled leaf prevented the tomato from exercising its influence. These leaves I carefully unrolled, placing upon them fresh ones from the tomato vine, with the result of banishing the last insect, and enabling the trees to grow with luxuriance. Wishing to carry still further my experiment, I steeped in water some fresh leaves of the tomato, and sprinkled with this infusion other plants, roses, and oranges. In two days these were also free from the innumerable insects which covered them; and I felt sure that, had I used the same means with my melon patch, I should have met with the same result. I therefore deem it a duty I owe to the Society of Horticulture to make known this singular and useful property of the tomato leaves, which I discovered by the merest accident."

The Egotist's Note-book.

THE fate of Mr. John De Morgan—by the way, where do the De Morgans come from, France or Wales?—now lying in Maidstone Gaol for his share in the Plumstead riots, shows that although manorial lords and powerful landowners may enclose commons with impunity, it isn't a prudent thing for the commoners or others to assert their rights by knocking the fences down again. Without expressing approval of Mr. De Morgan's short method with the spoilers, I can't help thinking how much more wicked it is in the eye of the law for a poor man unlawfully to pull down a fence than it is for a rich man unlawfully to put it up. Mr. Talbot, the amiable magistrate and member of Parliament who sentenced Mr. De Morgan, was unintentionally guilty of a charming piece of irony when he declared that "any attempt by persons to take the law into their own hands was a proceeding which could never be tolerated in a country so happily governed as this." Of which of the encroaching manorial lords does Mr. Talbot propose making an example?

The following letter has been addressed by the Prime Minister to Mrs. George Smith, announcing her Majesty's intention to bestow upon her a life pension of £150 per annum:—"10, Downing-street, Whitehall, Oct. 20.—MADAM—The Queen, sympathising with you in your bereavement, and in the loss of one whose interesting and devoted labours have shed fresh light on ancient history, has been pleased to confer on you a pension of £150 per annum. I have given directions that her Majesty's gracious intentions shall be carried forthwith into effect.—I have the honour to be, madam, your faithful servant, BEACONSFIELD.—To Mrs. George Smith." One hundred and fifty pounds per annum!—about as much as a bricklayer earns. But this is princely as compared to the fifties and seventies bestowed upon some literary men whose brains and sources of income have dried up. Who would not be a scribe, and write and study, and study and write, and then come in for the noble pension of a grateful Government!

Holmes—son of Albert Smith's Holmes—who knows everything, says that if matters come to a crisis, and Russia invades Turkey, we shall seize Constantinople and Egypt, and, of course, stick to them. Well, I don't see why not. It would be rather a harum-scarum proceeding though, by the way, and rather startling to the plump, veiled beauties behind the grilles. What a blessing, though, for Constantinople, which has always seemed English ever since one used to write it as a text-hand copy at school. Why, Constantinople would become clean; and as for the dogs— Ah! how about those packs of dirty, dejected, mangy curs, that the Turks will not have killed, but kick, maim, burn, scald, and treat in a way that would make the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals shudder? What is to be done with those dogs? I have it—a Turkish Home for Destitute Dogs done out of their scavenging business by the advent of the Giaour. The Brown bequest and the Home for Lost Dogs people might undertake the task, unless some contractor from amongst the celestial hordes of the

Heathen Chinees should come forward, with his smile that is childlike and bland, and buy up the whole lot for making puppy pie.

Mr. Forbes (?) gives a most entertaining account of a distribution of medals by General Tcherniaeff in the Servian camp. General Tcherniaeff walked along the rather rickety line of braves, followed by an orderly bearing the medals; and the General, after pinning the decoration on his breast, embraced and kissed each recipient with great effusion. Of course, there were volleys of cheering from the throngs outside the square; and there was a burst of laughter when a little Montenegrin lad, of about thirteen, who has been trying his 'prentice hand at fighting with extreme eagerness during the last few weeks in this quarter, stepped out to the front, and, ranging himself in line with the full-grown braves, waited expectant for his decoration also. Tcherniaeff, as he passed the urchin, patted his head; but this is a species of recompense for valour apparently not in high estimation with the Montenegrin youth. The boy looked supremely disappointed, and gazed hungrily at the box of medals which the orderly was carrying. Tcherniaeff passed on, but General Komaroff, who followed the orderly, would not see the youngster wholly disappointed. He handed him, not a medal indeed, but a ducat. . . . The Montenegrin boy took the ducat with a joy that could not have been greater had he got the Takova cross, let alone a silver medal.

It is quite refreshing to meet once more with the name of Eliza Cook on the frontispiece of a very charming little song, composed by Mr. Frederick C. Bevan, and published by Messrs. Willey, of Great Marlborough-street. The words of "Sir Harold, the Hunter," are probably familiar to the readers of Eliza Cook's poems; the music of the song ought soon to become the same, inasmuch as it is bright, full of spirit, and within the compass of any ordinary voice. A further advantage is that the accompaniment, while very effective, is simple, and easily mastered by those not gifted with the practice-engendered power of playing at sight.

A Mr. Farthing has been writing to the papers to state that, although of the same trade, he has not the slightest connection in business with his brother, Mr. E. Farthing, whose name appears in the morning's list of bankrupts. Now, setting aside the fraternal nature of this announcement, who in the world, outside their own particular circle, cares a farthing whether one brother or the other was in the bankrupt's list? The fact is we are all bitten with the same idea, that the world is keeping its particular eye on us and all our movements, when, if we are farthings—nay, sixpences or shillings—the chances are that we have hardly ever been heard of. With the sovereigns, of course, the case is different—everybody knows them; and when one becomes bankrupt, whether it be a Bomba of Naples or an Isabella of Spain, people begin to talk.

Here is a police case:—"Charles Turner, 10, was charged with stealing a shilling. The prosecutor was the prisoner's father, and he stated that the boy had been pilfering since his wife had been away ill. On this occasion he took a shilling from his pocket. He

admitted taking the money, and spending it. Mr. Bridge: Have you flogged him? The father: Yes, and kept him in. Mr. Bridge remanded the prisoner to the workhouse, for the school board officer to take up the case." One reasonably says the sooner the school board officer takes up the case the better, if a father cannot govern his own son, aged ten.

Is there no more good, wholesome birch growing in the land? One would think not, to see such cases as the above, and that which occurred the other day down the Great Western line, where some little scamps of boys tried, by laying stones on the rails, to upset a train—one of them declaring, naively, that he thought it would be good fun to see an accident, and a lot of people killed. These amiable youths were actually let off with a reprimand, and a few hours' confinement in a police cell. Oh, if that boy had been my own flesh and blood! Well, as fathers say when about to flog their offspring, "It hurts me a great deal more than it hurts you;" so I expect I should have, as the Yankees say, smarted "some."

It is not often that an accident occurs to one of the fraternity of anglers. A sad affair, however, has happened at Oxford to a Hungarian gentleman, a friend of Professor Max Müller, who went to the river Cherwell for a few hours' angling. He started with an attendant, and they crossed to Deep Martin Island, but became separated. The attendant, having called to his companion several times without receiving a reply, went to look for him; but, to his surprise, found he was missing, his hat being on the island, and there being footmarks as though he had slipped into the water. On obtaining the assistance of one of the University water bailiffs, the body of the unfortunate man was discovered in about six feet of water, three yards from the bank from which he had been fishing; and there were traces on the side which indicated a sudden slip.

KYANOS.—Kyanos, or the blue-coloured metal of the "Iliad," which was employed in the decoration of the shield of Hector, is supposed to have been produced by dipping heated copper into water containing sulphur. The coppersmiths of Corinth understood the art, and obtained the blue colour by plunging the metal into the fountain of Peirene, which was probably a sulphur spring. Some pieces of a blue substance were found by Professor Schliemann at Hissarlik, and, having been submitted to analysis, they prove to be sulphide of copper. They are presumed to be specimens of Homeric kyanos.

The season has arrived when every one is thinking of turning from the sultriness of town life to the pleasures of a country tour. Ladies who take very little exercise when at home, with true British courage often undertake long and tedious journeys. It is of the highest importance, under such circumstances, that the clothing should in no way impede the proper circulation of the blood, but especially should the old but bad practice of gartering the leg be avoided. Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London, has provided the only means of remedying this in his New Patent Stocking Suspender, which he will send by post for 2d. extra. The prices are—Children's, 1s. 6d.; maids', 2s.; ladies', 3s. Our advice is to write at once for a pair.

My Adventures with a Highwayman.

[Times have altered since the year 1742. Nowadays, a gentleman who wishes to send money into the country pays into a bank, and sends a banker's order by post; most likely then he would pack the money in a valise, strap it on his horse's back, and ride cautiously with it himself to its destination, his attention divided between the valise behind and the holsters in front of his saddle—for it was not safe in those days to travel without pistols. If he wishes to travel without money, he "books through," enters a carriage, and is whisked by rail to his destination. In those pleasant times, the journey was performed by slow stages, and took days where it now takes hours. These differences are shown in the following story of adventure, founded on a fact, the incidents occurring near Hull, in the above year.]

CHAPTER I.

"I WONDER whether she loves me?"

"You had better ask her," said a voice close at hand.

When, looking up, there was John Wood looking at me in a sneering way; and I became aware of the fact that I had been talking aloud, and also that I was colouring up as red as the binding of the old ledger before me on the desk.

"Who is it, Dick?" said John Wood, with the same sneer. And he grinned at me through the rails at the top of the great double desk where we sat facing one another. "Is it the cook, or the new nurse over the way?"

I felt as if I could have knocked him down with the big book; but I only frowned, and held my tongue; for I did not want to quarrel, and he knew well enough of whom I spoke, and it was out of jealousy that he was sneering. Though I must own that it looked very weak for me to be babbling with my lips about that which was in my heart. However, I have only one excuse to offer—I was twenty-seven years old, and I was in love.

It's a terrible complaint, this love. I caught it at my master's house, he being a merchant in the city of York, and connected with a firm with vessels trading from the port of Hull. John Wood and I were his clerks, and we lived in the house; that is to say, we took our meals and slept there, spending all our other time in the gloomy, sky-lighted room called the office. But at meals and prayer-time there was the object of our idolatry—little Nelly Manby, our employer's daughter—always kind and chatty to us both, seeing after our mutual wants, and acting the part of a most notable little housekeeper to her widowed father.

I had been sighing about her for a couple of years. So, I suppose, had John Wood; and we had hated each other ever since, although to outward seeming we were the best of friends, and there was nothing extraordinary in the way.

But now I had shown my hand to my adversary, and sat there with my teeth set, quite at a loss for that which I would have given anything to hurl at him—a smart repartee.

Half an hour before, we had been seated at breakfast, Mr. Manby hiding himself behind his newspaper, and little Nelly, in her clean gingham gown, looking so

bright, and neat, and fresh that I felt as if I must go and throw myself on my knees at her side, and tell her I loved her with all my heart. I could eat no breakfast: the milk seemed bitter, and the bread like chaff; and all the time, there sat my little queen, with the sweet little dimples in her cheeks and chin, so innocent, smiling, and happy, that it seemed a sin to fret.

There was one great solace for me, though; and that was the fact that John Wood was miserable. He could eat, certainly; but I knew he only did it because of a determination to show me that he was perfectly calm.

And now there we were in the office, and I had asked myself aloud the very question of all questions that I would not have had any one hear. But I remained silent.

"There," he said, tauntingly, "I know what you mean; but I can tell you one thing, she's too sensible a girl ever to care for the attentions of a weak-minded idiot."

A weak-minded idiot! I couldn't bear that. John Wood had been trying to quarrel with me for months past, and I had resisted the desire I had had to pommel him; but there are bounds to everything, and now he had overleaped them.

I jumped off my stool, and ran round the partition.

Seeing me coming in so menacing a manner, John snatched up the heavy ruler and the penknife; but that didn't deter me. In another moment I should have had him by the throat, when the door opened, and Mr. Manby came in.

"Here," he said, hastily, "I want one of you to go to Hull directly. You must ride, and go well armed, for there is a sum of money to take. Well," he said, in some surprise, "who is it to be?"

For we both of us drew back; not that, for my part, I was afraid to go, but on account of leaving the field clear for my rival, who for the next few days would be able to talk to Nelly in my absence, and might make such way that I should never be able to recover it.

"Here, you go, Richard Hollis," said Mr. Manby. "What cowards you young men are!"

"I'm no coward, sir," I said, sturdily.

"Well, then," said the old gentleman, "just show that you are not, by taking care of the money I give you, and by blowing out the brains of any scoundrelly highwayman you may meet."

"I'll do my best, sir," I said, cheerily. "I can't do any more."

"No one asks it, Dick—no one asks it. I don't wonder at your not wanting to go, for it is a risky journey with money. However, you shall have the best pistols and the nag, and I wouldn't say a word to a soul about where you are going. Only get ready directly, and go, then there will be less chance of your being followed. Ah, my lads, we live in sorry times! Do you hear, John Wood, not a word to any one about where Hollis is going."

"Very good, sir," said John Wood.

And I went out, with a sorrowful heart, to get ready for my journey.

"Come down to me in my room as soon as you are ready," said Mr. Manby, "and I'll give orders for the nag to be saddled. You must take nothing with you. The valise I shall pack ready."

"If I could only meet Nelly!" I said to myself. "How I should like to say 'Good-bye!'"

But I went up to my room without seeing her; and

I was coming down again, booted and spurred, and feeling very miserable, when my heart gave a great leap, for there she stood by the sitting-room door, looking, as I thought, quite sad.

For a moment, I felt that frightened I could have fled; but the next I was by her side, holding her hand, and telling her that I was going.

"Yes, I know," said she, looking up at me, with tears in her eyes, "and I was quite frightened when I heard it. But you will take care, Richard?"

"Indeed, and I will," I said; "and I shall not rest till I get back."

"Shall you be glad to get back?" she said, simply; but with a pretty little smile upon her lip.

"I shall know no rest till I am where I can look in your face again."

She blushed, and looked down; and somehow I began to feel that there was hope for me.

"I must go now," I said, softly. "Your father is waiting. Good-bye."

"Good-bye," she said, in a whisper; and her little hand for the first time pressed mine.

"Folks who part and go long journeys kiss when they say God-speed, Nelly," I said to her, feeling very bold.

"Would it be right?" she said, looking up at me through her tears.

"I cannot think it wrong," I said, bending down; and then for a moment her little innocent face was held up to mine, so that a kiss was laid softly upon her peachy cheek, and then she drew trembling away.

"Good-bye, Richard, and God-speed," she said, softly. "You will take care?"

"I only fear one thing," I said.

"What is that?"

"A rival's words in my absence."

I could have bit my tongue out as soon as I had said it, for she looked up at me with so sad and trusting a smile that I wondered at my want of faith.

There was not a moment to lose, and I ran down so quickly that I blundered against John Wood coming in at the door which led to the stables.

He muttered an oath, and then said something about "obliged to go out;" but I did not take much notice of it then, only hurried on to Mr. Manby's room, where I found him waiting. He gave me a pair of pistols ready loaded, and then ammunition; and then brought out a small leather case, which he strapped securely upon the back of my saddle.

"Now, my lad," he said, "spare no pains to get well on your journey. Do your work well, and I shall not forget it."

I sprang into the saddle, in high glee and full of spirits, waved my hand, caught a glimpse of John Wood's frowning face at the window, the wave of a white handkerchief from another window, and clattered down the streets, out of the gates, and soon left the town behind.

CHAPTER II.

IT was a beautiful morning, and I felt so joyful that I was ready for anything. The leathern case I had behind me, I knew, must contain a very large sum, from the great cautions impressed upon me by Mr. Manby how I was to pause nowhere on the road, save at good

inns, avoid all company, and have no rest until I had placed the case safely in his partner's hands.

"I'll do it—he may trust me," I said; and I cantered merrily on, till a turn of the road showed me a horseman going in the same direction, and at much the same rate.

I paid little heed to him, for he kept on about a quarter of a mile ahead; and sometimes I saw him, and sometimes he was hidden by a turn of the road. My dreams were principally, as you may be sure, about Nelly; and it was out of this mid-day musing that I was somewhat rudely roused by coming suddenly upon my fellow-traveller, jogging along at a walk.

"Ah, scoundrel!" he shouted, as I cantered up and he drew a pistol. "Not while I have life."

"What is the matter?" I asked, coolly.

"Tut, tut!" he exclaimed. "Why, I took you for a highwayman. Zounds, sir, I beg your pardon," he continued, putting his pistol back in his breast.

"No harm done," I said, quietly. "I hope you will meet with no worse companions."

And I was cantering by; but he put spurs to his powerful roan nag, and came up alongside, riding knee to knee.

"No worse companions?" he said—"no, I hope not; and I think I can't do better than choose you. Two well-armed men ought to keep all highwaymen at bay, and we can get safe to our journey's end. You go to Hull, I presume?"

I evaded his question, for my instructions were to speak to no one about my journey. His ideas about mutual protection certainly attracted me; but my directions stood in the way, and I said, hastily—

"I have to hurry on."

"By Jove!" he said, "so have I."

And he kept alongside, no matter what pace I rode, chatting away; till, quite out of patience, I exclaimed—

"Really, sir, I must ask you either to go on or to allow me to pass on my way. I am on business, and I wish to be private."

"Oh, as you like," he said, insolently. "But the King's highway is as free to me as to you, young man."

Then, putting spurs to his horse, he cantered on at a pretty good speed, till he was out of sight.

There was something about the man that I did not like; and if there had been another road that I could have taken, I certainly should have left the highway, so as to avoid him for the future.

But I reasoned with myself that perhaps I was behaving rudely to an estimable gentleman, and doing him wrong; at all events, I was doing my duty to my employer by keeping aloof. And so I rode on till I came upon a dreary, open common, and about a quarter of a mile in front there was my friend, dismounted, and evidently busy over one of his horse's shoes.

"Now, suppose," I said to myself, "that is a ruse. This man evidently wants to be hanging about me. He may be a robber; but how did he get to know of my coming?"

In an instant, my suspicious nature connected him with John Wood's hasty and confused return when I ran against him.

"Pooh!" I ejaculated, "it's cruel to be so suspicious."

And I cantered on, to see my fellow-traveller slowly mount his horse, after a little more examination.

"Nearly cast a shoe," he said, as I came up.

And then, by an adroit movement, he spurred his

horse so that it blundered on to mine; and before I could guess his intention, he had me by the collar, and a pistol was thrust in my face.

"Give up quietly, or I'll blow your brains out," he exclaimed. "Attempt to touch those pistols, and I fire. You needn't look round; there isn't a soul for miles."

In a flash, I saw that I was trapped; and Nelly, Mr. Manby—my return, robbed and in disgrace, half ruining, perhaps, my master—all ran before me in an instant of time.

"I'll sooner die!" I exclaimed to myself.

And, as I struck up his arm, I stuck the spur into my nag, and he bounded forward, as I was nearly dragged from his back.

I heard a savage curse, as the highwayman nearly shared my fate, but saved himself by letting go. Then there were a couple of shots fired as I galloped on, and directly after I became aware that my enemy was in hot pursuit, and, as I turned, I could see that he was loading his pistols as he rode.

The dust flew as my nag stretched out its head for a long gallop; but the highwayman was better mounted, and his powerful roan gained on us at every stride.

"Never mind," I said, savagely. "Let him come; he sha'n't have the money without a struggle."

Then it suddenly occurred to me that I had not used my pistols; and, taking one out, I watched my opportunity, aimed low, and fired, but without result. Then I hesitated about firing the second. Could I load again before the enemy came up, if I missed? If not, it would be better to save it for close action. I thought, however, that I could load again as I rode; and determining to risk a second shot, I took careful aim again as the action of my horse would allow, fired, and, to my intense joy, saw the roan horse halt, stagger, and then fall headlong in the dusty road.

I stopped to see no more, for the man fired after me again; but spurring my nag, I made the best of my way across the common, to pass through a village, and soon afterwards reached a town, where I stopped to bait—never leaving my horse, though, for a moment; and at the end of half an hour being again well on the road, but going at a moderate pace, and, though I did not anticipate pursuit, glancing back occasionally to see if there were any signs of my friend upon the roan.

Putting that and that together, I began to suspect that this man must have been informed of my journey, and determined to investigate the matter upon my return.

WHEN we picture the hundred or more trunks that ladies travel with, we cannot help reflecting how happy is the elephant, whose wife when on a journey has only one trunk.

INGENIOUS.—A lady recently asked her servant how the mustard pot had become cracked. The reply, made with all gravity, was that she did not know, but supposed it was owing to the mustard being so strong.

A WEST Indian, who had a remarkably red nose, having fallen asleep in his chair, a negro boy, who was in waiting, observed a mosquito hovering round his face. Quashey eyed it very attentively; at last it lit upon his master's nose, and instantly flew off again. "Yah, yah!" he exclaimed, with great glee—"me berry glad to see you burn your fut!"

Bodgy.

ONLY a pet name. Never child was Christen'd Bodgy yet.

But that was as near to Georgy, you know, as his baby sister could get;

And the name stuck to him, the dear little chap. It suited him well, you see;

For Bodgy was podgy, and short, and fat, just as a Bodgy should be.

Three years old, and the only boy in our garden of baby flowers—

The pet and the plague of all the house, was this little Bodgy of ours.

There was Edie, flaxen-hair'd, and five: wistful, and pale, and fair;

Who used to talk of "the children," dear heart! with quite a motherly air.

And the next was Gertie, our four-year-old—christen'd Gertrude, you know—

With eyes as blue and cheeks as pink as you'd see in a waxwork show;

And then came Bodgy, and, last and least, was our tiny two-year pet:

Our bonny, wee, dimpled, dainty Mag—that's "baby" for Margaret.

Goodness knows, they were noisy enough, the girls, when they had their will;

But as for Bodgy, I don't believe that child knew how to be still.

From morning to night he was on the go; and talk about lungs, dear me!

There wer'n't such another juvenile pair in the whole of Leytonstone, E.

That's where I liv'd "when I was at home," as people sometimes say;

But I us'd to be up in the City at work the biggest part of the day;

And when I got back again at night, how the youngsters would skurry and shout,

And swarm about me, and try to turn my pockets inside out!

For I mostly had something nice with me, if they only knew where to look:

Some cakes, or sweets, or an orange or two, or perhaps a picture-book.

And if I was later than usual home, and they'd toddled to roost forlorn,

There was something under their pillows for each when they woke up first in the morn.

But I always liked to be with them, you see, whenever I had the power;

And it cheer'd me up when I us'd to think of home and "the children's hour";

Though Bodgy was rather trying at times, as I dare say you may have guess'd;

For of all the young Turks that ever were, he was the "Turk-eyest."

He was as dark as a little nigger almost, with bonny black eyes and rare,

And a rough-and-tumbled, stand-on-end, shock-head of coal-black hair.

And his legs were a little bandy, the comical little elf;
And the," said his nose was *retroussé*—I called it a
snub myse-elf.

'Twas he was the first to welcome me home with a
noisy shout of glee,
And when I'd sat down to my chop, or what-not, he'd
clamber up to my knee;
And he'd get a bit in his fingers and munch, fearless
of fashion's laws;
Then lovingly pat and stroke me down with his little
greasy paws.

And when I'd settle down at last by the fire for a quiet
read,
I'd hear him creeping up behind, but pretend to take
no heed;

Till two little arms stole round my neck, and a plead-
ing voice would say—

"Pick-a-back, dada—pick-a-back!" and he had to
have his way.

And then I had to tell him a tale, and ride him on my
knee,

And make pretend to tumble him off, while he chuckled
and crowed with glee;

Or perhaps he'd have me show him "the way to Lon-
don town,"

Which meant that I was to take him up, and turn him
upside down.

And, if I was lateish up in the morn, he'd rout me out
of my lair—

I knew what was coming as soon as I heard Bodgy
climbing the stair:

A rush, and a shout, and off would come the clothes, as
cool as you please—

"Tum, dit up, lazybones!" he'd cry; and I had to
"dit up," or freeze.

Then on Sunday afternoons, I'd like to have forty
winks, you know;

But was sure to wake up in a sudden fright, with a
gasping, gurgling "Oh!"

And there'd be Bodgy, astride my chest, with my
whiskers in his grip—

"Gee-up—wohoa!" and he'd tug away, the wicked
little rip.

But when he saw I was hurt and cross, the tears in his
eyes would shine;

And his little arms stole round my neck, and his cheek
was laid to mine.

"Poor dada," he'd say, and stroke my face; and what
could a fellow do

But laugh, and tickle, and toss the rogue, till we both
were blown, we two?

It happen'd one summer's afternoon, the wife was going
to spend—

After breaking her promise again and again—an hour
or two with a friend;

But she didn't like the youngsters left alone with the
girl, you see;

So the task of keeping the rips in bounds fell, of course,
upon me.

That morn'g we had a grand confab at breakfast—
Bodgy and I—

And his black eyes sparkled at thought of the fun we
planned for by-and-by.

"Dear, dear," said his mother, "I'd better go away for
good somewhere:"

But Bodgy looked very grave at this, and sidled up to
her chair.

And, of course, he had to be tickled and kiss'd, and
called her sweetest and best,

And her "norty-porty-pippety-pet-and-poppet," and all
the rest.

But I really believe he was glad, the rogue, when he
saw her go away:

"Tum along, dada, dear," he said, "now you may tum
and pay."

And a pretty riot the rebel made—he and the others,
too—

What with cricket, and horses, and hoop and hide,
there was such a hullabaloo,

That the neighbours—to put it mildly, you know—must
have wished us at Jericho;

And at last, half-melted, and tir'd out, I had to sit
down and blow.

'Twas awfully hot in-doors, so I got a chair, and my
pipe and a book,

And carried them into the garden behind, to a shady
little nook;

And I told the youngsters to quietly play by them-
selves awhile, you see,

And I'd join them again for another romp by-and-by,
maybe.

Then I lit my pipe and open'd my book, and was deep
in its pages soon.

'Twas just the sort of reading I like for a summer's
afternoon,

When a fellow has cosily din'd and win'd, and feels
himself in the vein

For a lazy look at a favourite book he knows won't
puzzle his brain.

'Twas the "Ingoldsby Legends" I'd got, and what
with their soothing power, it seems,

And the pipe, and the heat, I was dropping off into the
land of dreams,

When Edie came running up to me, with a puzzled,
half-frighten'd air:

"Oh, pa, do you know where Bodgy is? We've looked
for him everywhere."

I was pettish, you see, at being disturbed, and my
answer was rather rough—

"Oh, he's hidden up somewhere, of course; you'll find
him soon enough."

And she ran off, crying "Bodgy!" and the others took
up the cry,

In their baby-treble, "Bodgy!" But there was no
reply.

"Bother that boy!" I muttered—"he's up to some of
his tricks;

I shall have to be down upon him yet, just 'like a
thousand o' bricks!"

Then I yawn'd, and stretched myself, and rose.

"Bodgy," I cried, "come here!
Bodgy, where are you? Bother the child, he must be
somewhere near."

I looked for him in the wash-house, in the cellar behind the stairs,
And beneath the kitchen dresser, and under the parlour chairs;
And I kept my eyes about me, for I thought to myself, you see,
"He'll pounce out on me directly, and try to startle me!"

Upstairs and down I sought him. I shouted, but all in vain;
And a sudden chill came o'er me, and a sense of terror and pain,
As I recollected how once before he'd wandered away just so,
And at last they found him picking flowers by the river, down below.

The day, as I said, was very hot, and the doors stood open wide;
They'd been playing at hide-and-seek, it seemed, and 'twas Bodgy's turn to hide:
And the "slavey"—a little slip of a girl—had "heard him creep," she could swear,
Up the passage and out in front, into the garden there.

They thought he was hiding up behind the laurels, Edie said.
And they tiptoed up to the door, it seems, and peep'd, and turn'd, and fled;
Then peep'd again, and then at last went boldly out; but, ah!
Bodgy was nowhere to be seen, neither close at hand, nor far.

'Twas a sort of no thoroughfare, our street, and the farther end open'd out
On a field that led to some forest land, and the river I spoke about.
There wasn't a soul in sight; and I ran to the main road, almost wild,
In the hope of finding somebody there who might have seen the child.

Just at the corner a fellow lean'd, smoking a dirty pipe—
A fur-capped, bull-necked, red-nosed man, of the costermonger type.
"Have you seen a youngster pass this way—a little boy?" I said.
And he lazily took his pipe from his mouth, and grin'd, and scratch'd his head.

Had he seed any kids? Well, yes, there was one of Mother Muggins's lot;
A red-headed— Oh! that warn't the one? Well, he thought, werry likely not.
"But don't yer worrit yerself, old pal," he said, "about yer brat,
There's lots of kids about, and to spare, if yer comes to the matter o' that."

I turned back home with a heavy heart, and got my hat and cane,
And told the girl to fasten the door, and be sure to keep up the chain;
While Edie whispered, with tearful eyes, "Do find him, pa dear, pray!"

Perhaps one of those giants you told us of has taken him far away!"

I hurried down to the river-side with a sinking sense of fear,
And I questioned everybody I met, and hunted far and near.
But he seem'd to have vanish'd all at once as completely, you understand,
As if he really and truly had been borne off to "Giant-land."

Then I made my way to the station-house, and there I told my tale
To a bluff-looking, sleepy sergeant, who I fancied smelt of ale.
He wrote my name and address in a book, and the child's description, too:
"Ah, he's sure to turn up again," he yawn'd—"these youngsters allus do."

'Twas dusk by now, and I walked back home, with a heart as heavy as stone:
Poor Edie clung to me and sobbed, when she saw me come in alone;
And I had to try to comfort her—" 'Twould all come right," I said.
And as soon as I could I got the girl to take them off to bed.

Then I sat me down to wait for the wife, my fever'd brain in a whirl.
"Dear Bessie," I thought, "'twill break her heart, when she comes to hear, poor girl!
There's nobody like her Bodgy to her—ah, that's her ring at the bell!
Oh, how I'm to break it to her, poor heart, is more than I can tell!"

She came in flushed and laughing-eyed, and sank down into a chair—
"Better late than never," she said;—"past eight, I do declare!
How are—why, goodness gracious, Jack, what makes you look at me so?
Is there anything wrong with the children? Speak! There's something happened, I know."

I tried to treat it lightly, you see, but I must have bungled my tale,
For she seem'd to think there was worse behind, and turned a deadly pale.
"Bodgy lost!" she cried. "How lost? What, missing since half-past four!
Oh, Heaven! Oh, my boy, my boy—I shall never see him more!"

"A pretty welcome home this is. There, I'm never out of sight,
But something is sure to happen! But, oh, this is worse than all to-night!
Why didn't you send for me before? Oh, dear, I feel so bad!
Oh, for God's sake, man, do something at once, or I shall go mad—go mad!"

"Bessie," I reason'd with her, "be calm—be calm, and hear me out!"

I hope and believe there's nothing you need distress yourself about."

Then I told her all the story, and everything that I'd done,

And how every moment I hop'd to hear good news of our little one.

But, woman-like, poor heart, she wouldn't sit down and calmly wait,

But paced about the room in tears, in a half-distracted state.

Then she clung to and kissed me, and wept, and whispered, "Forgive me, Jack.

But what shall we do—oh, what shall we do, if we never should get him back?"

"Who had I seen at the station-house?" she questioned, tearful and low.

"And what were the very words I used? and how long was it ago?"

And hadn't I looked out for the man when he came round on his beat?

And was I sure—oh, was I sure—they knew our number and street?"

And when she'd been up to the others, who were snug in bed asleep,

And linger'd about them a little while to kiss her darlings and weep,

She got me to take her along with me to the station-house to hear

How they'd described her Bodgy, and if they'd heard of him yet, poor dear.

The same bluff sergeant sat at his desk—"Good evening, sergeant," said I.

"Good evening to you, sir. There's nothing yet been heard of your little b'y.

Oh, this is your good lady, eh? Sit down, ma'am—you're looking ill.

Will I read what I've written about the boy? Why, yes, of course I will.

"Three years old last birthday; eyes black, and hair as well;

A little blue and white sailor suit; linen marked G. L.; Answers the name of Bodgy; legs short, and bandy, and fat."

"Oh, I'm sure they're not," sobbed Bessie. "Oh, how could you tell him that?"

A big, bluff fellow the sergeant was, but he had a kindly tone;

I fancy he was a family man, with little ones of his own.

There was something hearty and friendly like in his very manner and look;

And these were the cheery words he spoke, as he laid aside his book:—

"There, don't you worrit yourselves. Our men'll be soon on his track.

Lor bless yer, there's scores of kids get lost; but they allus get 'em back.

I only wish I was half as sure of a super's berth, my dear—

Beg pardon, ma'am, I mean—as I am that we'll have him here."

There was nothing else that we could do until the morrow morn,

So I took poor Bessie home again, heart-broken and forlorn.

And I got a decent woman close by to come and be with her, you know;

For I thought she might be taken ill, she sobb'd and shiver'd so.

She wouldn't undress, but just laid down outside the bed, you see,

While the woman sat by her all the night and watch'd; and, as for me,

I only took off a thing or two, and lay down on the bed

In the next room, there; but never once through that night of worry and dread

Did I get a single wink of sleep, but shifted, and turn'd and tost;

And pictur'd all sorts of horrid things of the little one we'd lost.

And God knows how my weak heart bled for the poor dear wife, alas!

For I knew how wearily for her this heavy night must pass.

I thought, "Ah, he's been run over, perhaps; and, oh, he may be dead,

Or lying maim'd, and in agony, in some grim hospital bed."

And I pictured the wistful, pitiful look of wonder, and fear, and pain,

In those black, lustrous eyes of his that might never smile again.

Then I thought to myself, "It may be, our boy has been lur'd away,

And stripp'd—perhaps murdered—who knows? We read of such horrors every day!

Or perhaps he's drown'd, and they'll bring him back all ghastly by-and-by,

And we shall stand by his coffin-side, his weeping mother and I."

I thought me of all his merry pranks in the happy by-gone days,

Of his pretty, broken, baby talk, and his saucy, wilful ways,

And how dark, and drear, and joyless 'twould be, the life that lay before,

If we were to see his bonny face and hear his voice no more!

What if they brought him home to us dead? or, worst and weirdest of fears,

What if the days were to pass into weeks, and the weeks into months and years,

Till our hair grew grey with waiting in vain, and our lives were steep'd in gloom

'Neath the weight of a mystery unreveal'd for us this side the tomb?

'Twas just in the ghostly dawn I heard a cab drive up—ah, me!

Then a double knock, and the watchful nurse stole down to the door, you see.

And Bessie came to me white as death, all shaking and faint—"Oh, Jack,

What shall we do? Oh, I know he's dead, and they've brought his body back!"

Hark! what was that? A voice that made our fond hearts wildly beat:

"Mummer—oh, mummer, dear!" and then a patter of little feet!

Then an eager rush downstairs, and, ah! with a passionate cry of joy,
His mother was sobbing on her knees, with her arms about her boy.

And there was our friend, the sergeant, his jolly face aglow—

"There, we've brought him back, sir," he said. "I told you we should, you know.

No, thankee, sir—put up your purse. 'Tis but my duty I've done.

But if any man deserves a reward, this cabman here's the one."

'Twas a simple story they had to tell. The afternoon before

A four-wheel cab had left a fare at our neighbour's house, next door;

And while they were taking some luggage in, Bodgy must have spied

The cab with the door wide open, and crept inside to hide.

Then he must have pulled the door to, for fear somebody should peep;

And, being hot and tired, no doubt, he seems to have fallen asleep.

And the man had turn'd the handle, and on to his box, and away,

Little thinking what sort of a fare he'd got behind him—eh?

He stopped at a place or two, but the child was sleeping still, no doubt;

For he'd got back home to Stratford, it seems, before he found him out.

Then he heard a curious noise in the cab, and when he opened the door,

There was Bodgy, as large as life, sitting up on the floor.

He was crying then, and calling out for his "Mummer, dear," you know;

And the cabman was startled-like, he said, and thought it a "rummy go;"

For who the youngster was, or how he got in the cab, or where,

He knew no more than the man in the moon, and could only wonder and stare.

He took him in to some women at a "pub" that was close at hand,

And they kiss'd him, and question'd him where he liv'd; but all they could understand

Was, "Zumberdee Veltero Dayston," which, his mother said, in a huff,

Was "Number 3, Wellington-road, Leytonstone," plain enough.

Then they told the police, and there soon went round a sort of hue and cry,

Which reach'd at last our sergeant's ears, and he sent and fetched the boy.

And here he was again at last, our little rip of rips, With his mother's arms around her child, and her kisses on his lips!

That's a true and correct account of how Bodgy was lost and found—

"Ah, here he comes! What's doing now? Some mischief, I'll be bound.

Will I have a game of kickets? Yes; and you shall be ball, you know.

There, I've got you. One—two—three! Ha! ha! and up you go!"

EDWIN COLLIER.

New Music.

WE have received from Messrs. Howard and Co., 28, Great Marlborough-street, W., a selection of new dance music, which, as out-door and other amusements are now beginning to give place to pleasures of a more homely character, makes a welcome appearance.

"The Merry Winter Time Galop," by C. T. West, is full of spirit, and the piece fairly deserves its title. The cover is pictorial and attractive.

"Song Birds" and "The Carnival," are two waltzes composed by H. Watson. Both are excellent, and are sure to be favourites in a ball-room. Of the two, "Song Birds" is, perhaps, the prettier. "The Carnival" is dedicated by permission to the Countess of Ellesmere.

"When Johnny comes Marching Home," is the title of a set of quadrilles, also from the pen of Mr. Watson. A number of popular airs, such as "Katey's Letter," "Nancy Green," "The Sugar Shop," "Pretty Jemima," and the one from which the piece derives its name, have been laid under contribution. It is lively enough, but a trifle vulgar.

"The Pickwick Quadrille," by F. Révallin, is rather thin, although not without merit. There is a great deal of humour in the title-page.

"Elaine," by Arthur E. Klitz, is an exceedingly graceful mazurka, and, rendered by a careful executant, would be thoroughly appreciated.

"Evetide," a reverie, composed by Herr Siegfried Jacoby, is the work of an accomplished musician, and is in reality what it professes to be.

"The Playmates Polka," by Fred. Groves, and "The Young Shaver Polka," by William Blakeley, are suitable for little beginners. They are both fingered where necessary.

"The First Lesson" is a set of quadrilles arranged by Ernest Donajowski, the airs chosen being such old favourites as "Three Blind Mice," "Begone, dull Care," "Oh, dear, what can the Matter be?" &c. A capital set for children.

"Won by a Head," by J. Batchelder, is, as may be guessed, a racing galop—one, if we may use the turf expression, that keeps up the pace from beginning to end.

"The Bessie Waltz," composed and arranged by Philip Conolly, does not profess to be original; but it is, nevertheless, very pretty. Some favourite songs have been utilized in its composition, including "Cherry Ripe," "Belle Mahone," "Norah O'Neal," and others.

"The Midnight Schottische," by François Bernard, is musical; though whether it would be easy to dance to is another matter.

A Rush with the Bison.

ONE of the plans used by the Indians for capturing buffaloes is to drive them into a narrow cañon or gorge, across which has been built a wall of snow high enough to prevent the escape of the animals when they have once entered the gorge. On each side of the funnel-shaped path leading to the cañon, stakes of the height of a man, and covered with tinsel, are fixed in the ground, at intervals of about sixty feet, for the purpose of frightening the animals. At the entrance of the cañon the Indians lie in ambush behind some green branches of trees stuck in the ground, while some clever horsemen are spread over the plain for the purpose of surrounding the herd of buffaloes, and driving them into the path leading to the valley which forms the trap. To accomplish this, the Indians shout vociferously, and drive in the stragglers with long stakes of wood, sometimes armed at the end, spear-fashion, with iron spikes.

Scarcely has the herd entered the narrow gorge, when the Indians, hidden behind their shelter of branches, suddenly dart out, and further terrify the animals by discharging their guns amongst them. Once caught in this trap, nothing but death is before the poor beasts; and they have to die, to the very last individual of the herd.

In the centre of the cañon is generally a tree, on which the Indians have hung shreds of buffalo flesh, and rags of various colours, in honour of one of their deities; and one of them, the tenor of his tribe, sings in the honour of the Spirit of the Chase while the buffaloes are being trapped. Of course, the tenor does not leave his post until all the animals are killed.

A different mode of hunting buffaloes is practised by the Pawnee Indians. The mounted huntsman fires on one of the animals in the herd, and tries his best to separate it from its fellows. As soon as this is achieved, he attacks it with his lance, or even fires at it; though it is very difficult to shoulder a gun when one is seated on a horse which is constantly stepping into the openings of the burrows made by the prairie dogs. I should add that in this case the animal, on finding himself hard pressed, often turns upon the huntsman and his steed, tearing the sides of the one and the leg of the other with his horns.

Buffalo hunting is, in spite of its dangers, a very tempting pursuit for the Indians; for these animals provide them with almost all their necessities. The horns become powder flasks, the skin makes shields and mocassins, and is also used as a cloak to protect the more delicate of either sex from the severe cold of the winter season.

A buffalo robe sells in Canada for a very high price, and when sledges are used on the snow-covered roads, those who travel on these light vehicles wrap themselves in buffalo skins for protection from the cold. Besides, the Indians make various articles of the hair, such as garters, aprons, girdles, &c., while civilized nations use it for weaving stockings, gloves, and also a serviceable kind of cloth.

The flesh forms an excellent food, something like juicy and tender beef, but with a flavour which reminds one of venison; while the tongue is a morsel for an epicure.

The greatest delicacy it affords, however, is the

hump, which in some respects resembles a sweetbread. It is prepared by the Indians in a particular manner of their own, which deserves being described. They dig a large hole in the ground, throw into it large pieces of wood, and make a tremendous fire in this open air oven. When all the wood is reduced to charcoal, they throw over it a quantity of sand, on which they place the hump, and, covering the whole with earth, they leave it to cook for about half an hour. At the end of that time they re-open the cavity, cut off the burnt part of the hump with a bowie knife, and then serve it hot; and I declare, after tasting this excellent dish, that it forms the most delicious tit-bit imaginable.

The fat is also a valuable commodity—a single animal sometimes furnishing as much as a hundred and fifty pounds.

Not only do the Indians, but the wolves of the American forests make fierce war upon the herds of buffalo. When attacked by them, the buffaloes form themselves into a circle. The strongest are placed in front, ready to fight with horns and hoofs, if need be; while the females and the young are placed in the centre. In this way, unless one falls, the herd may defy all enemies.

Since the invention of the revolver, many more buffaloes have been killed in all parts of North America; for several tribes of Indians are provided with these weapons, and are by no means slow to make use of them with effect.

Many of these aborigines, however, hold a tradition that their existence depends on that of the herd of buffalo, and believe that if they were totally destroyed there would be no more Indians. This deduction seems reasonable enough, when we remember that these animals seem to have been placed in the American forests to serve as food to the inhabitants; but that instead of using this provision sparingly, the savages have been wilfully extravagant, killing the buffaloes by thousands—not for the sake of the meat, but to leave that to the vultures and wolves, taking away nothing but the tongue and the skin. The settlement of the Mormons in Utah has also tended to diminish the number of these animals; and no doubt, unless there is some cessation of the wilful destruction, they will shortly be completely exterminated.

One adventure which I have had may be worth recording. Hunting the bison with some friends by the high waters of the Missouri, one of my companions—whom we called the General, because he was the guide of our caravan—found himself, in a perfect storm of icy rain, launched at full gallop over a plain, where the snow had drifted into little hillocks. A buffalo passing near him, he drew his revolver, and at the second shot hit it so hard that the beast bounded into the air, and then fell prostrate. Unfortunately, the bison was not dead; for after a short interval it leaped up, and precipitated itself furiously against its aggressor. So sudden and so true was the onslaught, that the General was unsaddled, and pitched head first into a mass of soft snow, where he was stamped upon and butted at by the wounded animal.

I was witness of the struggle, and, fortunately, had sufficient *sang-froid* to raise my double-barrelled rifle to my shoulder, and fire right in the animal's ear. It threw up its head, shook it, and made as if to rush at me; but the next instant a shiver passed through the

massive frame, it sank upon its knees, and rolled over, to rise no more.

As for the General, he remained with his legs kicking out of the snow, while I sat holding my sides and roaring with laughter, till he crawled out, red in the face, his hair powdered with the snow, and ready, upon regaining his feet, to join me in my hearty laugh.

"Much hurt?" I said.

"Hurt?" he exclaimed, with his face suddenly assuming inches of length. "Just you go and shove your head, stranger, into one of them thar heaps of snow, and then let a buffler crittur run full bullock at you, and you'd be as full of bruises as this child is, you bet."

Whereupon he stood knocking the snow off with one hand, while with the other he rubbed himself gently in such places as had been in contact with the buffalo's head.

"It was a lucky escape," I said.

"'Twas so, stranger. You saved my life, you bet; and if you'll take this here bit o' steel, and keep it, and wear it for my sake, you'll have a true friend always by you—one as 'll stick to you as true as I will, as long as we're together."

Saying this, he lugged a long bowie knife, with its sheath, from his belt, a *couteau de chasse* which forms part of a trophy now ornamenting the walls of my growlery at home.

Wanderings in Half-a-Guinea.

By MAJOR MONK-LAUSEN.

CHAPTER XXIII.—A HAPPY DAY FOR HALF-A-GUINEA —AN INVITATION.

AS a greedy boy at Christmas time who is taken to an afternoon performance of the pantomime, forgets for a while the prospective joys of the turkey which is browning at home in the glories of fairyland and the humours of Clown and Harlequin, so the unsophisticated Kreps were surprised by the military pageant I had prepared for them into temporary oblivion of roast beef, tongues, and marrow-bones.

In truth, it was a curious and imposing spectacle. I took up my position, with my staff, at the foot of a spur of Asor, the saluting base being marked by a bamboo pole, surmounted with Krakrane's skull.

On the rising ground behind me the elders of the tribe, with Piti and such women as were present on the occasion, were stationed. In front a large square area was marked out with spears, outside which the remainder of the assembled people were gathered. Within the enclosed space the troops were drawn up in line of columns at deploying intervals, and alternated, first a body of musketeers, then one armed with spears and bows.

When I made my appearance, thirty-one maroons were fired, and at the signal the columns deployed and presented arms. Then the ranks were closed, and two lines were formed, the front of men with firearms, the rear of the spearmen and archers. I then inspected the whole, accompanied by twelve of the most influential old men of the Krep tribe; and the appearance of the soldiers, considering how short a time they had been drilled, was excellent. They did not wear much, but what clothing they had was uniform, and very neat

and clean; their arms were in good order, and they stood as steady as statues.

When the inspection was over, I put them through a few simple manœuvres, which were, however, most intricate in the eyes of the spectators. They extended, skirmished, relieved, reinforced, advanced, retired, closed, charged, and formed in column again. Then I went to the saluting base, and the review terminated with a march past which any troops might have been proud of; for their national dances had taught them to step together in one unbroken line, with such precision, that they had had very little to learn in that direction.

These proceedings over, the troops were formed up in close column on two sides of a square, which was completed by the civilian, or rather the untrained, body of the tribe. A rude but firm table, which had been prepared for the occasion, was carried into the centre of the open space, and a chair placed upon it.

When all was ready, I mounted this platform, and made a speech. I told them that somehow I took a particular interest in their welfare, and would undertake, if they wished it, to complete the work I had begun—subdue the Kralls, keep the Dutch on the coast in their proper position as peaceful traders, promote industry and agriculture, and make things generally pleasant; but that, if they did not desire my services, I was quite ready to go home to England, and leave them to their own devices. Indeed, if I only consulted my own wishes, that that was the line I should adopt.

And then I sat down.

Then, as arranged beforehand, an influential Krep got up, and uttered a few remarks in my honour—laying on the butter quite as thickly as any British chairman could have done.

When the applause which greeted his words was at its highest, he suddenly proposed that I should be elected King, with supreme power of appointing subordinate ministers, levying taxes, taking lives, or doing anything I pleased, without question or remonstrance; and this modest suggestion being received with a roar of applause, he pronounced me unanimously elected.

When the tumult had subsided, I again rose, and professed myself extremely astonished and perfectly overwhelmed by the kind manner in which they had offered me the throne; that, as they wished it so very much, I would take it for a time on trial, at all events.

Several old Kreps then mounted the platform, one of whom prostrated himself and offered me a severe-looking toko, dyed purple, as an emblem of my authority to inflict punishment on my subjects. This was very well, but I could hardly preserve the gravity suitable to the occasion when he placed himself in a position which intimated his readiness to become the first victim.

Another ceremony took me quite by surprise, and raises an interesting question respecting the origin of the Alfoers. I certainly never dreamed that the ancient custom of anointing their monarchs was likely to obtain amongst them; and yet this proved to be the case.

And it was done thoroughly.

A man came up with a large gourd, hollowed out, and filled with a particular sort of palm oil, very rare, which he clapped, with a sudden movement which prevented the spilling of any portion of its contents, on my head.

The oil, which was, happily, of delicious perfume, oozed out slowly and gradually all round this vegetable crown, pleasantly lubricating my face, neck, and shoulders; for as I did not wish to commence my reign by hurting my subjects' feelings with any breach of etiquette, I refrained from removing the gourd all day, and allowed its contents to soak in or trickle away, as might happen.

After all, the oil was as good a preservative against the stings of insects as the glycerine, and infinitely nicer. The worst of it was that, on awaking the following morning, I found that my hair had grown a foot, which, to one who was accustomed to a short crop, was inconvenient.

Do the barbers and old beaus prick up their ears? Well, there are at present only half a dozen trees in the island which produce this nutritious substance, but I am endeavouring to cultivate them; and if I succeed, let bears rejoice and Rowland tremble.

When the ceremonies were over, the feasting commenced, and lasted as long as any beef remained, which was three days. Then those Kreps who were not required for military service returned to their villages, and I commenced the work of organization.

Into this I do not design to enter in the present plain and simple narrative. A learned and thoughtful work on the art of government will appear some day, containing the details of a most successful experiment.

Before I had got my social reforms into good working order, the Kralls interrupted my schemes with their threatened attack. Had they met my trained men in the open, short work would have been made of them; but they wisely stuck to the forests, from which I had more difficulty in driving them. I succeeded, however, by employing the following tactics, suggested by the affray with the monkeys.

The men with firearms skirmished from tree to tree; those armed with bows and arrows concealed themselves in the higher branches, and advanced in concert with their comrades below. The Kralls, intent upon shooting at the Kreps in front of them, could not avoid the plunging shower of arrows from overhead, without exposing themselves to the bullets which came horizontally.

So I routed them in every battle, and soon induced them to sue for peace, which I granted on easy terms, and ratified by marrying my principal officers to girls of their tribe.

And now that we are on the subject of marriage, I may mention that if any ladies of prepossessing personal appearance are desirous of competing for the position of Queen, they may send their photographs and addresses to the office in Tavistock-street, and one of them may hear of something very much to her advantage. None over the age of five-and-twenty need apply. The strictest confidence may be depended upon.

To pass to a more important subject. I am not of a selfish disposition, and it is a source of regret to me that I should have some of the finest sport in the world entirely to myself. I therefore propose to offer six months' shooting in Half-a-Guinea to eleven thorough sportsmen at five hundred pounds the gun. Not that I require money, for the resources of the island are magnificent, and only want development to make me the richest potentate, for the size of my dominions, on earth. But I entertain a strong prejudice against

needy adventurers, and it is to exclude such that I put the terms of subscription at so high a figure.

The country is settled and prosperous, agriculture and manufactures are thriving, and there is game of every description. Indeed, my conscience accuses me of over-preserving, and the moolahs and boas really ought to be thinned down a little.

For those who like to combine speculation with their sport, I have invented a species of competition which will throw Hurlingham into the shade: this is kangaroo shooting with rifles, one barrel only allowed.

Five traps, each containing a kangaroo, are placed at intervals of ten feet apart, at a distance of a hundred and fifty yards. This is the scratch; of course, in a handicap it could be reduced to any extent. At the word "Pull!" the kangaroo which is released springs to an amazing height, and it is really pretty shooting to take them in the air.

I am prepared to lay two to one on the beast against the gun, as long as any winner of the Queen's prize at Wimbledon likes.

Scorpion fights come off every week.

I am about to import horses, but the forest is too thick at present to admit of good hunting; though if you got an ostrich out on the plain, he would afford a good run.

Of the fishing I need say nothing; the few anecdotes which I have given of sport on the big lakes speak for themselves.

It is generally possible to get newspapers or letters every two months.

For the rest, subscribers must not expect many European luxuries; but I think that they will find those of Half-a-Guinea a very good substitute. The climate is excellent, and the laws are mild.

In fact, I allow every man to do exactly as he pleases, provided it does not displease me.

General public, adieu. Subscribers, *au revoir*.

THE END.

Out for a Holiday.

THAT is surely a happy fashion which provides us an object for which a country walk may be undertaken with an interest beyond mere exercise. After all, even the most ardent health-seeker must have felt how inexpressibly dreary are the four, six, or eight miles of pedestrianism unrelieved by some definite object to be attained during or at the end of the journey.

It is true that there are few parts of England where the natural beauty of scenery is not sufficient inducement to undertake a journey even on foot; but it too often happens that tourists avail themselves only of those spots which are easily reached by railway or other conveyance, and so attain a thorough acquaintance only with the general aspect of what may be called show landscapes, instead of acquiring a loving interest in the little romantic nooks and corners which are only to be found by the true admirer of nature. These spots abound in all parts of England; and though they are seldom mentioned by those to whom they are best known, and who regard any invasion of their secluded precincts with a sort of jealousy, they become more completely appreciated every year, till the charm of freshness begins to fade from their once retiring beauty.

The fresh, cool glade resounds to the hoarse cries of vulgar roysterers; the quiet dell is the scene of a picnic; the wild blossoms are trampled; the strange grasses torn up and scattered; the velvet turf and mossy tree roots strewed with the remains of sandwiches, lobster claws, and broken bottles; while in the vale itself a shabby but staring public-house is rapidly erected, and the once shy cottagers adulterate their milk, and advertise to supply "tea at ninepence," or "bilin' water at twopence a head."

But, as old and favourite haunts become desecrated by the intrusion of the vulgar, new places of resort are continually presenting themselves to notice, and new recreations for labour are every day being invented. And it must be confessed that it is now more than ever their own fault if visitors to the seaside or quiet inland places find the days pass heavily. Science is "made easy" by the subdivisions of natural objects into classes, and the numerous cheap handbooks in which the most listless amateur may find something instructive; and the inquirer may learn how to stock rivers with salmon, or to rear water-beetles in a glass bottle. For ourselves, we confess to a preference for fern-collecting, for ferns may be said to lead to almost every variety of scenery; they are less "sloppy" than the denizens of the aquarium, and are found in quiet retreats, where we may have fair companions who are not reduced to the necessity of goloshes. One touch of nature makes the whole world kin, and we earnestly recommend all despondent lovers and all shy maidens to pursue the study of ferns; they possess very many minute peculiarities, and it is really surprising what discoveries may be made by two persons examining these exquisite plants by means of a mutual pocket microscope.

Amongst the very best of places for the study and collection of ferns, commend us to Ecclesbourne and Fairlight Glens, or to "Old Roar." There are few prettier spots in England than these; and, apart from any object in going thither, the beautiful dell, with the clear water trickling and rippling over the rocks, on its way down to the "ribbed sea sand," the blush and glow of field flowers, which are thick as a soft Turkey carpet, on the level sward above; the deep, cool, fresh growth of moss and grasses in the bed of the little valley; the rustling sigh of the trees, the hum of insects, and the songs of birds, blending in one sweet murmuring trio, with fugues for the cuckoo and the thrush, are attractions not easily surpassed. There is another attraction, too; and that is the softened light, as it comes in through the leafy screen overhead, and the golden haze through which stem, and leaf, and flower are seen in such perfection.

For romantic beauty, Ecclesbourne is inferior to Fairlight; but it is, perhaps, a better place for the gathering of ferns, which is our present subject. The great palmated leaves of dark green, with their rough, brown scales; the feathery sprays of the buckler, or the alternate bright fronds of the lady fern; the wonderful varieties of the beautiful spleenwort, the "adder's-tongue," horsetail, and the noble "Royal Osmund," may be sought here; and a few hours will suffice to stock a large "wardian" case with beautifully varied specimens; not forgetting the soft green, dark brown, and tender light-yellowish mosses.

To those who would collect successfully, we would

suggest a small tin case for holding the specimens; and it will be found necessary in every case to remove with the root a good proportion of the rhizome, or that stem from which the leaves and roots spring. The earth should be allowed to adhere to the roots, and both root and rhizome be enveloped in wet moss, or some other damp covering. It will be well, too, to notice the nature of the soil, and the situation in which each particular specimen grows, and especially the degree of light in which it seems best to thrive.

The "wardian" case may be represented by any large glass vessel from which the air can be excluded, and in this the fern-seed (true fairy fern-seed, an interest in which will help to render, if not ourselves, some of our selfish troubles, invisible) may be reared. The regular fern cases are cheap and common enough; but for a commencement the glass pan and cover do very well if the bottom of the pan be first covered with broken tiles, to drain the roots a little, and the air be admitted about twice a week. In the close cases may be cultivated several varieties of spleenwort, maidenhair, hart's-tongue, bladder-fern, oak-fern, and some other sorts. To cultivate ferns in pots it is necessary to be careful of the soil, which should consist of black fibrous earth, combined with loam, sand, and sometimes a little old mortar. The pots should be filled to one-third from the bottom with bits of broken tile and freestone. The ferns must be frequently watered, with a fine rose to the watering-pot; and many sorts require constant moisture.

The lover of ferns, however, will scarcely rest satisfied till he has a fernery in his garden, either enclosed in a rustic shed, which is best, or in some shady corner. To rear the artificial rockwork, it will be necessary to lay a foundation of broken tiles and rubbish, the interstices of which should afterwards be filled up with rough sand and gravel; and a final layer of compost formed of loam, peat, sand, and old mortar and charcoal, will receive the clinkers, flints, and other rockwork.

For the lighter parts of the rockwork, and especially for the building in of pots here and there, there is nothing better or prettier than pieces of coke dipped in cement—their extreme lightness, porousness, and durability being very desirable qualities. Some ferns which grow in marsh land or near the beds of streams will require little pits of clay to prevent the water soaking away; and it would be well to have jets of water through a perforated pipe, so arranged as to play gently, and in some cases constantly, over the whole rockwork. The fern-fancier who pays an annual visit to Hastings will surely find that some otherwise dull places have acquired a new interest; for it cannot be denied that this healthful cinque port is strangely lacking in amusement. No "entertainment" seems permanently to thrive within its sober and demure precincts; and only the ardent lovers of nature, or people with great inner resources, can long remain without unutterable *ennui*, unless they seek beauties away from the town and beach. Do you remember poor Charles Lamb's querulous complainings of Hastings in the "Old Margate Hoy"? He says—

"I love town or country; but this detestable cinque port is neither. I hate those scrubbed shoots thrusting out their starved foliage from between horrid fis-

tures of dusty, innutritious rocks, which the amateur calls 'verdure to the edge of the sea.' I require woods, and they show me stunted coppices; I cry out for water brooks, and pant for fresh streams and inland murmurs. I cannot stand all day on the naked beach, watching the capricious hues of the sea shifting like the colours of a dying mullet. I am tired of looking out of the windows of this island prison. While I gaze on the sea, I want to be on it, over it, across it. It binds me in with chains of iron; my thoughts are abroad. There is no sense of home at Hastings. If it were what it was in its primitive shape, and what it ought to have remained—a fair, honest fishing town, and no more, with a few straggling fishermen's huts scattered about, artless as its cliffs, and with their materials filched from them—it were something. I am sure, no town-bred or inland-born subject can find true and natural nourishment at these sea places. Nature, where she does not mean us for mariners or vagabonds, bids us to stay at home. I would exchange these sea gulls for swans, and scud a swallow for ever about the banks of Thamesis."

A Word on a Watch.

ONE of the greatest of boyish ambitions is the possession of a watch; and when that great aim is achieved, how lovingly it is cared for, how tenderly it is wound, and how affectionately it is laid beneath the pillow, where its tiny ticks come soft and muffled through the intervening down!

Ah, that first watch was a wonder—nay, is a wonder!—and something to think about. As a rule, it does not go very well, but is rather affected with a complaint that may be called Captain Cuttleism; inasmuch as it either loses or gains, and, like the timekeeper of that renowned mariner, requires putting on a couple of hours in the morning and another in the afternoon, before it will do you credit. But then it is a watch, and it suffers from being opened very frequently for the examination of its works, or for showing to admiring watchless schoolmates. Then, too, it is wound up in its early days more often than is good for its constitution; and later on, less often, even to being forgotten for days. Then, too, it gets shaken up by boyish exercises, as if it were so much medicine, and the result is not satisfactory. One has had many watches since then, all of which went far better; but still, that was *the* watch of watches, the one of which we were proud.

Allusion has been made to the shaking up of the watch; and when it is considered how delicate is the construction of this curious piece of mechanism, it will be seen that rapid motion or jerks must be very much opposed to its keeping good time. No watches suffer more in the matter of regular timekeeping than those of horsemen. Your cavalry officer, whose system of riding necessitates a peculiar motion in the saddle, fares worst, but your huntsman or gentleman who takes much horse exercise has constantly to complain of the way in which his watch varies.

To meet this difficulty, an ingenious watchmaker, a Mr. T. A. Jones, of 352, Essex-road, Islington, has, after years devoted to experiments, succeeded in perfecting one which he calls "The Improved Lever, or Horseman's Watch." The merits of this are that, in addition

to its being a high-class watch and most reliable timekeeper, it is not in any way affected by jerks, even if those concussions be of the most violent nature, such as are experienced in riding, running, or jumping. Great advantages these; but it possesses others, among which are the facts that when in process of being wound up it cannot be injured, if by mistake the key is turned in the wrong direction. Now, as a matter of course, it must be accorded that no gentleman would ever be unable to properly wind up his watch; but, all the same, watch keys of a most peculiar construction have been invented to guard against the possibility of over-winding, and we can recall a picture in *Punch* which shows a gentleman congratulating himself upon his sobriety by declaring that he never considers that a man is drunk so long as he can wind up his watch—albeit, in this case, he is about to perform the operation with the corkscrew.

High-class watches of the most reliable nature are by no means rare; but the rule has hitherto been that the better the finish the more sensitive and liable to derangement was the watch. "The Horseman's Watch," on the contrary, while withstanding ordinary shocks, is less liable to get out of repair than a timekeeper of any other make. As this result is obtained without any increase of cost above that of ordinary good watches, publicity ought to command for this ingenious piece of mechanism an almost universal demand, certainly one of a most extensive nature; for while supplying such a *desideratum* for the horseman or traveller, it is, of course, highly eligible for him who is desirous of possessing a good watch.

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION.—The following are the conclusions at which the Royal Commission on the spontaneous combustion of coal have arrived:—"That certain descriptions of coal are intrinsically dangerous for shipment on long voyages. That the breakage of coal in its transport from the pit to the ship's hold, the shipment of pyritic coal in a wet condition, and especially ventilation through the body of coal cargoes, conduce to spontaneous combustion, even though the coal may not be unfit for conveyance on long voyages. That spontaneous combustion in coal cargoes would be less frequent if regard were had by shipowners and underwriters to these facts. That when coal is being carried on long voyages, the temperature in various portions of the cargo should be tested periodically by a thermometer, and registered in the log. That with a view to guard against explosion, free and continuous egress to the open air, independent of the hatchway, should be provided for the explosive gases by means of a system of surface ventilation which would be effective in all circumstances of weather. That in order to make known the descriptions of coal liable to combustion, the inspectors of mines should be instructed to hold inquiry into all cases of spontaneous combustion occurring in cargoes of coal taken from their respective districts, exporters being required always to record on their specifications the denomination of the coal forming the cargo. That no additional legislation with reference to the conveyance of coal by sea is required, unless for the purpose of giving effect to our proposals with regard to the inquiries by inspectors of mines, and to the fuller specification of coal entered outward at her Majesty's Customs."

An American's Impressions of England.

MY visit fell at a most favourable juncture as to weather, there being but few rainy days and but little fog. I had imagined that they had barely enough fair weather in London at any season to keep alive the tradition of sunshine and of blue sky, but the October days I spent there were not so very far behind what we have at home at this season. London often puts on a nightcap of smoke and fog, which it pulls down over its ears pretty close at times, and the sun has a habit of lying abed very late in the morning, which all the people imitate; but I remember some very pleasant weather there, and some bright moonlight nights.

I saw but one full-blown, characteristic London fog. I was in the National Gallery one day, trying to make up my mind about Turner, when this chimney-pot meteor came down. It was like a great yellow dog taking possession of the world. The light faded from the room, the pictures ran together in confused masses of shadow on the walls, and in the street only a dim, yellowish twilight prevailed, through which faintly twinkled the lights in the shop windows. Vehicles came slowly out of the dirty obscurity on one side, and plunged into it on the other. Waterloo Bridge gave one or two leaps and disappeared, and the Nelson Column in Trafalgar-square was obliterated for half its length. Travel was impeded, boats stopped on the river, trains stood still on the track, and for an hour and a half London lay buried beneath this sickening eruption. I say eruption, because a London fog is only a London smoke, tempered by a moist atmosphere. It is called fog by courtesy, but lamp-black is its chief ingredient. It is not wet, like our fogs; but quite dry, and makes the eyes smart and the nose tingle.

Englishwomen all have good-sized feet, and Englishmen, too, and wear large, comfortable shoes. This was a noticeable feature at once; coarse, loose-fitting clothes of both sexes, and large boots and shoes, with low heels. They evidently knew the use of their feet, and had none of the French, or American, or Chinese fastidiousness about this part of their anatomy. I notice that when a family begins to run out, it turns out its toes, drops off at the heel, shortens its jaw, and dotes on small feet and hands.

What we call beauty in women is so much a matter of youth and health, that the average of female beauty in London is, no doubt, higher than in this country. Englishwomen are comely and good-looking. It is an extremely fresh and pleasant face that you see; though, as some Frenchman has said, it is always and everywhere the same face. Cases of striking, of ideal, of maddening beauty are, no doubt, easier to find in this country; while American school-girls, I believe, have the most bewitching beauty in the world.

One sees right away that the English are a home people, a domestic people. And one does not need to go into their houses or homes to find this out. It is in the air, and in the general aspect of things. Everywhere you see the virtue and quality that we ascribe to home-made articles. It seems as if things had been made by hand, and with care and affection, as they have been. The land of caste and kings, there is yet less glitter and display than in this country, less publicity, and, of course, less rivalry and emulation also, for which we pay very dearly. You have got to where

the word *homely* preserves its true signification, and is no longer a term of disparagement, but expressive of a cardinal virtue.—*Scribner's Magazine*.

Strange old Customs in the North.

THE law of the town of Preston ordered that "any one sworn upon the council for the welfare of the town, guilty of showing the poverty of the said town," should be "put out from the fellowship of the council." At Hartlepool, *temp.* Henry VIII., the fine for "lystening about anie man's wyndowes" was twelve pence. The inhabitants of Preston were of a liberal turn of mind with regard to entertainments; for in 1593, the mayor of the borough was allowed to expend forty shillings whenever he thought fit, "for the honour and worship of the town."

At Hartlepool, in the year 1599, the council of the town made the following singular regulation:—"That the spoutes of the Church bee used in common in the tyme of rayne, and the water to be parted equallye betweene partie and partie, only one spout to be reserved for the mayor, upon payne for everie one soe violating this order iiijd." In 1600, it was ruled that any one calling a member of the Hartlepool council "a liar, be fined 11s. 6d.," but to say that one of the council was "false" caused the defendant to be fined 6s. 8d. only. About the same date, at Preston, women were fined for gossiping at the town wells on Sunday mornings. The authorities of the borough of Richmond, in 1596, ordered that "Any person making an affray shall be fined iijs. iiijd.; but if on a market-day, xvs.; on a fair-day, vl.; and if any blood be drawn, vjs. viijd. extra."

At Richmond, in 1574, the corporation, ordering that "no one winnow any corn in the street unless they carry away the chaff," enacted that swine-troughs should not be set in the streets, and that "no man suffer any swyne to come into the market-place on fair-days, or any other market-days, upon payne of vjd." At Hartlepool, in 1599, the council ordered that "whosoever he bee, of this towne yt keepeth anie mastive dogg within this towne not muzzled in the day, and in the house upon the nights, shall pay for every such default iijs. iiijd.;" also "yt is ordeyned yt no inhabitante of this towne shall keep anie geese or swyne within the precynctes of this towne, except upon their back-yard, upon paine to pay for everye swyne which shall be taken abroad, xijd., and for every goose vjd." At Newcastle there was an official named "the hougher," whose duty it was to chase any pigs he saw in the streets, and sever the sinews of their hind legs, as a punishment to their owners for letting them stray!

Hartlepool, in the olden time, was one of the places on the coast at which beacons were erected to give notice of the approach of the enemy's ships. A jocular story has come down that the authorities were very illiterate, and on receiving notice in writing from the Government, on the proclamation of peace, that the "beacon should no more be fired at Hartlepool," they read it that "*bacon* should no more be *fired* at Hartlepool." Without disputing the wisdom of the measure, they seized every frying-pan in the place, in order to prevent any infraction of the rule! The coroner of Darlington Ward was formerly elected by the bishop, and was sometimes bailiff and steward of Darlington

also. There is a tale of *felo-de-sea* connected with the coronership early in the present century. One Webster, a disappointed lover, cast himself into the river Skerne, and was drowned. At the inquest the jury were about to return a verdict of *felo-de-se*, when one solid yeoman, astonished at the deplorable ignorance of his compeers, exclaimed, "Nay, lads, nay, that wad niver dee; ivverybody knew that he threw hissel intit Skerne; folks wad think us all fules!"

The Egotist's Note-book.

SOME few years back the writer was invited to become the proprietor of a newspaper at Constantinople. In ignorance of the joys that might have been his, he refused, when he could have attained to the height of bliss described in a telegram just received, the same stating that three newspapers published in Constantinople have been suppressed for publishing the particulars of outrages committed by Mussulmans on Christians near Trebizonde. The editors have been arrested and ill-treated, the arm of one of them having been broken by the zaptiehs.

I wonder who publishes the *Public Leader*; for *apropos* of certain action taken by Mr. George Frederick Pardon, in consequence of a note which he considered libellous, gentleman after gentleman writes to the papers to say he is not the publisher. Well, it is not pleasant to be either printer or publisher, when it is taken into consideration that they are answerable for all the strong language that appears in the print they produce, no matter who may be the writer.

To the surprise of everybody, the Arctic expeditionists have suddenly returned, after penetrating farther north than any one yet had been; but only to declare that the passage to the Pole was impossible—a story I don't believe, for it will yet be done, whether by Englishmen or another nation remains to be proved. Our friends, who return minus four of their number, give terrible accounts of the cold, that cut like a knife; of the hundred and forty-two days of darkness; and of the perils and dangers of the sledge work over the ice—"ancient ice," they term it—some two hundred feet thick; and the cutting and hewing they had to do to progress one mile a day. The adventurous party seem to have met with exceptionally bad weather, and difficulties greater than have been encountered by any previous voyagers, the greatest enemy being scurvy.

The Arctic expeditionists say that all the *Polaris* cairns were visited. At the boat dépôt in Newman's Bay, a box chronometer by Negus, New York, was found to be in perfect order after an exposure of four winters. It has since been keeping excellent time on board the *Discovery*. If Mr. Negus is not proud of this announcement of the value of his watchworks, he ought to be; and if my turn ever comes to visit the American capital, I shall take care that a pocket chronometer by Negus of New York accompanies me back.

With all due respect to my readers, the Editor asks

me to say to all and several, remember *Ship Ahoy!* and look out for *Land Ahead!* To drop the enigmatical, let me ask the interest of all readers of *Once a Week* in the forthcoming Christmas story by Geo. Manville Fenn, author of *Ship Ahoy!* whose hundred thousand copies attained what the daily papers call a world-wide circulation. *Land Ahead!* is a tale whose locale is laid in the sister island, and it deals with the sorrows of the Irish emigrants who seek a home in the Far West.

A great fuss is being made at the present time about explosives, and firework-makers are being fined for sending them in their carts, in uncovered boxes, to their customers. This is simply absurd; and any one would imagine that the squibs, crackers, and rockets in question would go off like so much dynamite, when, as every schoolboy could tell the magistrates, the great difficulty after applying a light is sometimes to get the explosive compounds to go off at all. But to take the matter from a common-sense point of view, what would be the consequence if somebody threw a light into a firework-maker's cart? Why, some of the squibs and Roman candles would go off, and there would be a great fizzing, popping, and banging; but as to a dangerous explosion, that is a farce. Mr. Brock one day, showing me over his factory, alluded to this fact; and stated that if one of the firework sheds were on fire there would be no explosion, only a rattling off of the fireworks it contained. As to the dangerous nature of these commodities, and the esteem in which this danger is held, I saw a shop window full of fireworks the other night, all of them grouped neatly around a couple of naked gas jets.

In the next number of ONCE A WEEK will be commenced a New Story, by the Author of "Ship Ahoy!" entitled "THREE HUNDRED VIRGINS," and in the next part a New Tale of Arctic Adventure—"THE SEARCH FOR THE 'DAWN.'"

WHAT is harder than earning money? Collecting it.

WHEN is a horse not worth a shilling?—When it is worth less (worthless).

A MODERN essayist defines "gossip" to be the "putting of two and two together, and making five of them."

A SARATOGA girl writes home:—"There are plenty of males here—lisping, silly, hair-parted-in-middle swells; but, oh! for the sight of a genuine man!"

A DENVER paper says that an Indian chief left his squaw in a saloon there the other day, as security for the payment of a whisky bill. Probably one of the Pawn-ee tribe.

In a country tour, ladies who take very little exercise when at home, with true British courage often undertake long and tedious journeys. It is of the highest importance, under such circumstances, that the clothing should in no way impede the proper circulation of the blood, but especially should the old but bad practice of gartering the leg be avoided. Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London, has provided the only means of remedying this in his New Patent Stocking Suspender, which he will send by post for 2d. extra. The prices are—Children's, 1s. 6d.; maids', 2s.; ladies', 3s. Our advice is to write at once for a pair.

Three Hundred Virgins.

A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS.

CHAPTER I.—IN THE CALM.

HOT—hot—hot! The sun glowing like a white disc through the awnings rigged up over the decks, and simmering the pitch in the seams, till it swelled and oozed out, or formed big tears that glistened on the cordage.

Not a breath of air: the sails hanging in great festoons from the yards; and the *Zenobia*, a finely built, full-rigged, clipper ship, rising and falling very slowly, as her tall, taper masts described small arcs, urged thereto by the gentle swell of the calm sea, which lay a burnished mirror far as eye could reach.

It was dangerous even to look at that glistening waste—that is, to your skin—for it meant a red, tingling glow, then a sensation of soreness, and lastly an appearance of skin rags wherever the sun had touched.

"Doctor, why don't you come and sit down, or lie down, or do nothing somehow? It puts me in a profuse perspiration to see you dodging about with that thermometer."

"I want to find a good place to hang it in," said the person spoken to as "doctor"—a keen, grey-eyed young man of thirty, slight but strongly built; and, if not handsome, possessed of a thoroughly good-looking English face, shaded by a crisp, brown beard.

"What does it stand at, doctor?" said the first speaker, a man who might have passed for his brother, from the similarity of build and complexion; though, while the doctor was all eagerness and animation, the speaker looked heavy and dull—as if he required stirring up to bring out either his good or evil qualities which were lying dormant beneath an imperturbable crust.

"What does it stand at?" said the doctor—"over a hundred."

"And how high must it get before your skin begins to turn to crackling, and you roast?"

"That depends," said the doctor, seriously. "Keep your pores open, and a constant flow of perspiration by drinking—"

"Grog?"

"No, no—water, and the heat the human frame can bear is something wonderful, as exemplified in the modern Turkish baths. There is a record of a man who used, for pay, to undertake to play the salamander, and would go into a hot baker's oven, taking with him a candle, which used to melt all away, while he came out uninjured."

"Don't, doctor," said the speaker—the first mate.

"Don't what?" said the doctor, hanging his thermometer to one of the lashings of the awning, and then seating himself upon a folding chair beside the group lolling on the poop deck.

"Don't talk so," said the mate, languidly; "sit still, loll out your tongue, and pant."

"Is he always as idle as this in hot weather, captain?" said the doctor, laughing.

"Not he," said the captain, a bluff, grizzled man of fifty—a regular type of a commander of an emigrant ship. "He comes out of his shell sometimes."

"Not to talk, though," said the mate. "I say, skipper,

do you think the doctor's caught the complaint of the women?"

"Shouldn't wonder," said the captain, with a merry twinkle of his eye. "Pass me your tobacco, Laurent."

The mate handed his tobacco pouch to the captain.

"I suppose it isn't true, though," said Laurent, "about so many of the women shamming ill?"

"What, so that the doctor should come and see them?" said the captain, laughing. "Oh! I can't say—ask him."

"Joke away, gentlemen," said the doctor, taking the pouch, and rolling himself up a delicate cigarette with deft fingers. "But, I say—seriously, though, captain—if this calm keeps on we shall be having some sickness amongst them."

"Don't sound like it," said the captain, taking his pipe from his mouth, as the buzz and chatter of many voices came from the central part of the vessel, where quite a couple of hundred women were grouped in every possible attitude—working, singing, reading, but for the most part talking. "I never knew anything like the way in which they can talk."

"I say, doctor," said Laurent, sending a puff of blue smoke into the air, as he lay upon his back on the deck, "feel the skipper's pulse, and prescribe, there's a good fellow."

The captain stolidly held out his hand, and the doctor smilingly touched the great muscular wrist.

"Rum, eh, doctor?—one part to four, eh?" said the captain.

"No; one of those bottles of claret, and a lump of ice," said the doctor.

"Good!" said Laurent, smiling. "You needn't feel mine, doctor. Symptoms just the same."

"All right," said the captain. "Here, Saunderson, pass the word for the steward."

"Ay, ay, sir," said the sailor addressed, after getting a big quid out of the way; and word was passed forward, ship's telegraph fashion, man shouting to man, as if they were half a mile off instead of a few yards; and the result was that a lean-looking, uncomfortable man made his appearance.

"Bottle of claret, Smith, and some ice."

"Aint none," said the steward, gruffly.

"What, none!" said the captain. "There was plenty."

"Yes, *was*," said the steward, shortly.

"Then, what's become of it?"

"Better ask Mr. Helston," said the steward, sulkily.

"Eh—the ice?" said the doctor. "Oh, yes, I've had a good deal for some of my patients. I didn't think I'd had so much, though."

"Lots melted every time the store was opened," said the steward.

"Never mind," said the captain, good-humouredly. "Get the claret. We're always getting out of something, doctor, at sea."

"Even wind," said Mr. Helston, smiling.

"Ay, even wind," said the captain.

"I say," said the young mate, "I've hit a bright."

"Let's have it," said the captain.

"We've got three hundred women on board, and they talk enough to raise the deck."

"Well?" said the captain.

"I propose that we get 'em all brigaded, and set them to blow the mainsail, and—oh, here's the claret!"

The sulky steward had returned, and cooled the wine by wrapping it in cloths, and evaporating their moisture in the sun. Then, and then only, the cork was drawn with a loud pop, the ruddy claret was poured out, and the little group sat sipping it, as the man dozed over the wheel, and the chattering went on beneath the awning amidships.

CHAPTER II.—STRONG-MINDED.

"LOOK at that! Wine for the lords of creation, and we poor inferior beings stunted even with water. Yah!"

Deborah Burrows, spinster, was the speaker: a hard-looking woman, with a discontented air, who might have been any age between twenty-five and forty. She was neither reading nor working, but sitting with pursed-up lip and half-closed eyes, seeing everything that was going on around.

"Yes, it's a shame, isn't it?" said a merry-looking country girl, who was stitching away at a piece of calico. "Oh, I could drink a lot!"

"I dare say you could," said Deborah; "but it is not for such people as we are. Don't you know that we belong to the inferior sex, and that but for the brutal laws of our country there would have been ample place for us there—good positions in society, instead of our being driven off, like so many sheep in a flock, to seek for pasture in a foreign land?"

"My, how you talk!" said the sempstress, opening her mouth, and gazing as if in wonder at the speaker. "But I thought," she said, mischievously, "that we were going to Brisbane to—ahem!—find husbands, as they are so scarce at home!"

"Pah, husbands!" exclaimed Deborah. "Give up your right of thinking and acting for yourself to some *thing* who is not your equal in sense, let alone your superior! Pah! Mary Dance, I'm ashamed of you!"

Deborah walked over to the other side of the deck after emitting a snort, and the sempstress laughed merrily as she turned to a quiet, ladylike girl, whose wavy hair was gathered up very tightly in a knot behind her shapely head; but closely as it was bound, it could not hide its luxuriance. She was very plainly dressed, in a close-fitting grey stuff gown, free from every trace of ornament; but in spite of this the girl, even in that scattered crowd of a couple of hundred, seemed the most prominent figure there.

"I tell you what it is, Miss Monroe," began Mary Dance, and her needle clicked in the work.

"Hush! don't, please," said the girl, glancing nervously round, and she spoke in a whisper.

"Don't what, my dear?"

"Don't speak to me like that."

"Why, la! my dear, you look quite frightened. What did I say?" cried Mary.

"I'm not frightened," said the girl, smiling, and raising her large grey eyes to the speaker; "but you will ever forget that I am only one of the assisted passengers, going out to Brisbane for employment, and call me miss."

"I shall call you just what I please, my dear," said the other, stabbing her work very fiercely with her needle. "Who's a better right to be called miss than

you? Your father was a clergyman, and clergymen are gentlemen, and so you must be a lady."

The girl sighed.

"Don't talk like that, Mary—I know you want to be kind to me."

"Kind to you?" said Mary Dance, and her pleasant, countrified face lit up with a flush. "Yes, I should think I did. I should be a beast if I didn't, after the way you nursed me."

"Hush! don't speak so loud," said the girl—"the others may hear."

"Let them," said Mary, sharply.

"But it makes it unpleasant for me," said Grace, earnestly. "I want to be friendly and happy with you all; and if you call me 'miss,' it seems like setting me at a distance, and the others sneer and talk aside to one another."

"I should like to catch them at it before me," said Mary Dance, flashing up again. "They know well enough that you are a real lady, and it's nasty, mean jealousy. I'll give them a bit of my mind about it, if I catch them at any of their nonsense. Why, they ought to be proud to do all sorts of things for you, because you've been so unhappy, and are left an orphan and poor."

"Like you, Mary," said Grace Monroe, laying a soft little hand upon that of the speaker; and the tears rose to the eyes of both.

"Yes," said Mary, quietly; "but then I've been accustomed to work. After I left school, and went home to the farm, I used to do anything—clean, and wash, and sew, and make butter; so that I'm rough, and able to work."

"And so am I," said Grace, smiling sadly; "and very willing. You have been such a good friend to me, Mary, that I know you will oblige me in this I ask."

"My dear, I'll do anything you ask," said Mary, earnestly.

"Then never call me Miss Monroe again. Deborah Burrows looked very strangely at me the other day when you spoke to me."

"She, indeed!" said downright Mary. "Ah, I should like to slap her, with her woman's rights nonsense, and railing against the men. Says she shall get up a society out in Australia. You see if she don't marry the first weak little squatter she can get hold of."

"And Mrs. Kent looked annoyed, too," said Grace. "It is so out of all reason, Mary."

"Mrs. Kent's a stiff old tyrant," said Mary, sharply. "But there, my dear, if you wish it, I won't say miss any more, but always Grace; and I know I shall be horridly ashamed of myself the while. But, la! my dear, how pale and ill you look—why—oh, my gracious goodness, the poor girl's going to faint!"

Grace Monroe seemed to hear her, for she smiled faintly; but she fell back, her head striking heavily against the coamings of the hatchway before Mary Dance could save her, and then lay quite insensible upon the deck.

"There, don't come crowding round like a flock of silly sheep," cried Mary Dance, sharply. "There, that's right, keep every morsel of air away, and suffocate the poor girl! I haven't patience with you. Jane Geake, if you've any brains in that great head of yours, get some water."

The woman addressed extricated herself from the little crowd, and ran for the water, while Mary Dance loosened the fainting girl's bodice, and fanned her with her straw hat.

"What's the matter here?" said Deborah Burrows, elbowing her way to the front.

"Why, she's fainting, that's what's the matter," said Mary Dance, sharply; "can't you see?"

"Fainting!" ejaculated Deborah, in a tone of disgust—"such nonsense!"

"Yes, isn't it?" said Mary. "You couldn't faint, I suppose, if you tried. There, do stand on one side, Deborah Burrows; talking won't do any good here."

"No," said Deborah, spitefully, "I suppose not. We want the young doctor, I s'pose, same as you did when you were so ill. Nice to have a young doctor to attend on you, isn't it, Mary Dance? Shall I fetch the young doctor for *Miss Monroe*?"

"Oh, you—" exclaimed Mary Dance, in a towering passion; "if I don't box your ears one of these days, I'm—ugh!"

She busied herself over the fanning process, throwing all her angry energy into that, and shifting herself round so that she should not face the hard, smiling countenance of the last speaker.

"Yes, I thought as much," said Deborah, laughing in an unpleasant, cackling way; "here comes the young doctor—she wants him badly."

"You do, I think," retorted Mary Dance, "to make you into a mummy."

"Here, doctor," said Deborah; "here's another delicate patient for you. Poor creatures, how they must suffer!"

"Well, Mrs. Burrows," said Mr. Helston, quietly, as he met the woman's smiling gaze with a full, calm look, "you cannot expect all women to be made of cast-iron."

There was a titter amongst those standing round, and Deborah Burrows gave a little snort indicative of contempt, and turned away.

This was not seen though by the young doctor, who motioned the group back, and laid the girl's head gently upon a cushion.

"Give her air," he said. "She is only faint with the heat. That's better—she is coming round."

One or two of the girls whispered to each other, and Mary Dance looked hard at Helston as he tenderly moistened the girl's face with the sea water that had been brought, until there was a quivering about the eyelids, when his handkerchief was brought into play, and a few moments after the dark-fringed lids slowly unclosed, and the soft, grey eyes gazed vacantly up into his.

Then came the brightening of recognition; a soft flush began to rise in the cheeks, and the girl tried hurriedly to rise.

"Lie still, my child," said the young man, gravely noting every change in his patient's countenance. "There, that will do. Stay with her, Mary Dance, till I return with a draught."

And with quiet delicacy he rose from one knee, and turned to face Laurent.

"Not ill—not serious, I hope?" said the latter, anxiously.

"Oh, no," said the doctor, gravely—"fainting from the heat, nothing more."

"Not—not infectious, I hope," said Laurent, in a hesitating voice.

"Not in the least," said the doctor.

And he walked quickly to his little surgery, well stored with necessary medicines. Here he mixed something in a glass, and returned to the deck, to find it vacant.

The next moment Mary Dance stood before him.

"Grace Monroe has gone below, sir," she said, quietly. "I'll take her medicine, please."

The young doctor looked annoyed, but he handed the glass with a few words of advice.

"It's your turn to nurse now, Mary," he said, smiling. "Take care of her."

"Don't you be afraid of that, sir," said Mary Dance, shortly. "I'll do that."

"I know you will, Mary," said the doctor.

And he turned away, to encounter the mocking smile of Deborah Burrows, who stood by the companion ladder, with her mouth tighter than ever, and her eyes half closed, as she looked down from her self-climbed eminence upon one of the inferior sex.

CHAPTER III.—OTHELLO.

DINNER-TIME in the cabin, and Othello full of plights.

"Golly, Mass' Laurent, sah, she great she-griffin, sah. She shy de tater at me, sah, and one hit me he-ah."

The speaker was Othello, otherwise 'Thello, the black cook of the *Zenobia*, who had come to make his complaint to the first officer about the treatment he had received from one of the emigrant passengers; in proof of which he held his head on one side, and showed a quantity of mealy potato matted in his woolly locks.

"But it didn't hurt much, 'Thello, hitting you there?" said Laurent, seriously.

"No, sah," said the cook, stiffly—"no, sah; but nigger have some dignity, sah."

"And that's where the wound is, then, eh, 'Thello?" said Laurent, gravely; though the captain and Mr. Helston could not avoid a smile.

"Yes, sah, in him dignity, sah. Things come to debble of a pass, when great she-horse alligator of a woman like dat take to frow de tater at de cook."

"I'll speak to the matron about it," said Laurent, gravely.

"Dat no manner o' kind ob use, sah; she frow the tater right afore de matrum, sah. De matrum am 'fraid ob her, like all the rest of the passenger gal. She great bull-hoss woman, sah; and scruff Dick Jones on de ear todder day 'cause he laugh at her."

"I'm afraid she is rather an exceptionally strong-minded woman, Othello," said Laurent. "I'll talk to her myself."

"Lookye heah, den, sah; you take care, sah, or she play the debble wid you. She ought to be chained up, or else the doctor gib her something keep her quiet. Heyah-yah—heyah!"

Othello burst into a hoarse laugh, and showed his glistening rows of ivories.

"How did the row begin, 'Thello?" said Laurent.

"Why, sah, I habe send de tater down to each mess for de dinner, and den I frow myself back to breave a minute. Den I go to de little copper in de galley, and take out the oder tater for the cabin dinner; and I am

busy peel and mash 'em up, when dér come a 'clipse ober de door, and de great bull-alligator woman come wid a tin of tater, and look at me as if she go eat me, and say, 'He-ah, you niggah, what de debble you mean?'"

"No, no, Othello, she did not say that, surely?" said Mr. Helston, laughing.

"Well, sah," said the black, "I'se not quite suah she did say debble; but she in a debble of a passion, which am all de same; and she say, 'What you mean send tater down below on'y good for de pigs?'"

"I say, 'Madam Burrow, I 'sure you the tater am bea'ful."

"'You 'fernal niggah,' she say."

"No, no, not infernal, 'Thello," said Laurent.

"I tink you, sah—I not quite sure about that needer; but she say niggah, sah; and I tink it 'dirty niggah, de tater am not half wash, half peel, half cook, and I frow them at your dirty head."

"Madam, I say, 'dat is great insult to de cook in him own galley. Dem words tick in my froat."

"What's dem tater?" she say, an' she point to de dish I mash for de cabin.

"I say, 'Dat's for de genlum in de cabin;' and she say, 'Ha, ha!' and 'Ho, ho! For de lord ob creashum!' And den she say, 'Gib me de dish!'"

"I could not tand dat, sah, and I draw him away, and I say 'Nebbah!'"

"Den, sah, she take the tater out of de tin, and she frow them at me one by one, and I duck down, and dodge, but one hit dis chile, sah, right on the side of de head, sah, and it hurt my dignity, sah. Den she go."

"Were the potatoes good, Othello?" said the captain.

"Lubby, sah—I eat 'em all myself and not grumble; but that nosseros woman, sah, she always grumble—'cause she see de tings go into de cabin, and she tink she ought to hab fuss taste, sah."

"Well, well, 'Thello," said the captain. "She shall be spoken to. Don't take any notice; it was only a woman."

"No, sah, dat am it," said Othello, earnestly. "If little lubby woman frow de tater, dis chile neber say a word; but she not a woman, she great cock bufflow, and knock a niggah down soon as look at him; and dis chile feel hurt, bery hurt indeed."

"Well, I must say this for our friend Othello," said Helston—"the cooking for the cabin is excellent. Captain, a little more potato."

"Sah, I do my bess," said Othello, bowing.

"Yes, I think we've the best cook on the line," said the captain. "Laurent, a little more chicken."

"You find de chickum done to your liking, sah?" said Othello, who still lingered in the cabin.

"Done to a turn, 'Thello," said the captain, gravely.

"I berry glad, sah," said 'Thello. "Smith," he continued to the steward, who was waiting at table, "I hab more graby in de galley if de genlum want him."

"I say the cooking is superb," said Laurent.

"Mass' Lauren', I tink you laugh at de cook, sah," said Othello.

"I don't laugh at the chicken, then, Othello," said Laurent, helping himself to more.

"I berry glad you satisfy, genlum. I do my berry bess, sah. You like college pudding dinner to-morrow, sah? I make you one."

"By all means, 'Thello," said Laurent.

The cook stood and smiled a grand smile, the uncertainty he was receiving doing wonders to his wounded dignity.

"I tink, Mass' Lauren', sah," he said, backing now towards the door, "I go take up de pudding. Smith, you come in five minutes."

The steward nodded shortly.

"An' sah," continued 'Thello, "I tink, aff all, dat woman not worf notice."

"Quite right, Othello, quite right," said Laurent, seriously. "But I'll get Mrs. Kent to take a pull or two at her sheet."

"I hope so, sah, if it do her good; but I tink nature made mistake ober her, somehow. She nebbber get no husban' ober dah. Hy-yah, hy-yah, hy-yah!"

Othello's laugh filled the cabin, and then echoed along the deck, to be heard afterwards amongst his boilers and pots; for his wounded dignity was now healing fast.

When the steward had left the cabin, the conversation turned on Deborah Burrows, and her strong-minded ways.

"I tell you what it is, captain," said the doctor, laughing, "I should feel almost nervous if I were in your place."

"Why?" said the captain, smiling.

"For fear this Deborah should rise in her strength, with her three hundred amazons, and seize the ship, place us all under hatches, and hoist the black flag of freedom."

"By Jove!" said Laurent, "don't drop a hint of it, or she'll be making us all walk the plank. I believe that woman to possess impudence enough for anything."

Charles Helston thought so too; but he said nothing, only walked on deck, and after gazing over the wide waters for a few minutes, he went amidships to have a chat with the matron, and see a few of his patients who were unwell.

Notably, he looked out for Grace Monroe; but she caught sight of him, and went below. Mary Dance was, however, on deck, and he asked her of her friend's state.

"She went down as soon as she saw me coming," said Helston, in rather an injured tone, which, however, he changed on the instant, and felt vexed with himself for what he considered his childishness.

"Yes, sir, she generally does," said Mary, quietly.

"And why?" said Helston.

"Don't like you, I think," said Mary, quietly; and she looked full at the young doctor as she spoke.

"Don't like me?" he said. "Why, I have been most kind to her, poor girl."

"That's just it, sir," said Mary, nodding her head at him. "She don't like anybody to take notice of her—it's her way. Perhaps it's because she don't like physic."

Helston uttered an impatient exclamation, and passed on.

"He don't always feel like a doctor towards her, I know," said Mary to herself; "and so does she know, though she don't say a word about it. He's gone to look after her," she said, half aloud, as she watched his motions; "and there goes Madame Burrows to play the spy, and—"

"What ever are you talking about?" said a voice just above her head.

And, glancing upwards, there was Laurent, perched aloft on the rails, enjoying a pipe.

"I was talking to myself, sir," said Mary, quietly, "and you had no business to listen."

"But you were talking just under me, and I could not help hearing."

"Then you ought not to have talked to me again," said Mary. "What would the matron say?"

"Nothing whatever," replied Laurent. "Because strict laws are made for the governance of the emigrants, and to keep the sailors from being obtrusive, you don't suppose that they were to interfere with a pleasant little chat such as I should like to have with you?"

"Don't know, I'm sure, sir," said Mary, shortly.

But the eyes that gazed up were kinder in their looks than the words uttered, so Laurent went on.

"Are you comfortable, Mary—Miss Dance?" he said.

"You seem to have got my name very pat," said Mary, with a toss of her head.

"Yes," said Laurent, with a mischievous look—"we were talking about you in the cabin."

"Then you might have been better employed," retorted Mary.

"That's what we thought about your behaviour to poor Othello with the potatoes."

Mary started, and turned crimson.

"Now, you didn't think, Mr. Laurent—"

"You seem to have got my name very pat," said Laurent, with a malicious twinkle of the eye.

"Well, sir, we can't help knowing the officers' names; but, tell me, you didn't think that it was I who behaved so to the poor black cook?"

"My dear girl," said Laurent, "you should not talk of that noble specimen of humanity—the commander of our *batterie de cuisine*—in such terms as that. He is a man of most excellent presence, of great dignity. No, stop, Mary—Miss Dance—don't run away."

"Please, Mr. Laurent," said Mary, simply, "I don't like to be bantered."

"Then I won't banter you," said Laurent, earnestly.

"Did you think I insulted the black cook, then?" said Mary.

"No, indeed, I did not," was the reply.

"And you knew it was Deborah Burrows?"

"Yes, of course."

"Then it was too bad of you to say such a thing."

"Only a little bit of teasing, Mary, to brighten up the tedious voyage. Now, you're not cross with me?"

"Whether I'm cross or not, sir, cannot matter to you."

"Indeed, but it does matter," said Laurent. "On a voyage like this we ought all to be good friends, and to a certain extent you are under my care as well as the captain's."

"Then, sir, I hope you'll take good care of me, and see me safe to my journey's end," said Mary.

And with a low, half-mocking curtsy, she turned off, walked across the deck, and encountered Deborah Burrows—who looked at her with a profound aspect of contempt—and then went below, to get into the darkest part of the great cabin, where she seated herself, and prepared to work.

"That makes three times he has tried to talk to me,"

said Mary to herself; and then she added, pettishly—"I wish he wouldn't. I don't like him—he always seems to be making game of me—and—and I don't like it at all."

There seemed to be not the slightest reason for such conduct; but, all the same, Mary Dance had a good cry, all to herself, before wiping her eyes and joining Grace Monroe, who looked very pale and anxious in the dim light between decks.

"Miss Foussi!"

I HAVE seen many fellows "doing their spoons;" but Bill Harker against the world—"bar none"—for going the extreme pace.

It would have mattered little if Bill could have kept his courtship to himself; he might have worshipped in secret all his days, and no one have been any the wiser.

But the extravagant rush into polish betrayed this poor clerk. The dyed hair and abstracted air combined; his deep blushes when the subject of love was mentioned, however casually; the romantic air that sat so ill upon him; his visits to the theatres, in hopes of a chance glimpse of his idol; the hours he mooned about listlessly—all helped to make him a target for the jokes of his friends, and a fund of amusement for the "office."

His fellow-clerks chaffed him enough as it was; but oh, if they had but known, what was really a fact, that poor Bill did not even know the name of his fair enslaver, what a life they would have led him!

He knew her residence, however; for he had watched her enter a large boarding-house in the neighbourhood of Leicester-square, repeatedly: that was something.

According to his excited estimate, the house was almost palatial; it was a source of deep dejection to compare its stylishness with his modest but neat lodging at Camden Town.

What a number of boarders! how dashing some of them!—yet insipid and uninteresting enough to Bill, all save this one, the fair — Alas! that he knew not her name!

But, like a true-hearted fellow as he was, Bill rejoiced in his dear, though unknown, one being so grandly housed, while trembling lest it should be a bar to his success in winning her.

Meanwhile, he was not all unhappy.

Oh, the joy of standing by the area railings of an evening, when she had vanished from his enraptured sight, and he knew her to be in the drawing-room—could see, at rare intervals, her shadow flit across the blind! He would at such times stand gazing up at the crazy balcony. Now and then there were singing and music. She might be singing or playing, he could not tell—the piano was out of sight (and tune, too, for all that matter, but he did not notice it). One voice more clear and silvery than the rest was set down as hers; and he pictured her dainty, dimpled, white fingers dancing over the keys. Still, as he lingered, catching sometimes a glimpse, but often only a cold, some rude disturber would drive him from his watch. Now a vulgar cry of "Beer;" anon a low whistle from a furtive follower of Betsy Jane, the kitchenmaid, or some such unpoetical interruption, broke the spell.

Mrs. Mears, who kept the grocery store whence the boarding-house drew its supplies, began to be suspicious, as from the shop door she noted his frequent visits. He hung about so secretly, that visions of his being a bailiff haunted her. Strange to say, the boarding-house account had run on longer than usual, and she would have been glad of a chance of receipting it.

"Not but that the money is safe enough," as she observed to her friend, Mrs. Marchant. "But people do hear of such things nowadays as really makes you wonder who's who."

Wrought up at last, Mrs. Mears called on the landlady; and by way of, as she observed, "killin' two birds with one stone," delicately drew attention to Bill Harker's frequent visits, and, more delicately still, to the length, not of Bill Harker, but of her bill.

The irascible landlady, who, as Mrs. Mears testified, "was put out above a bit," frightened Mr. Harker out of his seven senses nearly, by sending a grimy servant one evening to ask him "to be kind enough to just step in, if he would be so kind, and just speak to the lady of the house."

In no condition to face the fiery-looking female he caught a glimpse of, standing ready, in full battle array, on the door-mat in the hall, the startled lover no sooner heard the message than he bolted, as if he had purloined the boarding-house plate. It would be, he argued, impossible to return after such an inglorious escape, except in disguise; and to call and boldly ask to see a lady whose name he could not give was an achievement the timid clerk could not venture on.

His employer, Mr. Brown, better known as Old B., had nearly made up his mind to dispense with Mr. Harker's services—for his attendance at the office had of late become too irregular for even an easy-going man like himself—when so decided an improvement took place in his clerk, that he hesitated. Bill was dejected, it is true; but he worked hard and steadily, and kept time like a clock. He seemed to Old B. to have given up a life of dissipation suddenly.

"He has signed the pledge, I believe," said Mr. Brown to himself. "Let us see how he keeps it."

Weeks passed, and nothing happened to alter his employer's opinion. If he had become an abstainer, it did not make him more cheerful; but he was as steady as old Time. So the notice was torn up, and Bill was spared the pain of knowing it had ever been written.

What a stupid fellow Fipkins, one of the other clerks at Old B.'s, was! At least, Bill thought so; and how he disliked him!

"The enormous impudence of that fellow," he would murmur to himself. "I would give a quarter's salary, poor as I am, to be like him. There is nothing he would stick at. It is disgusting. But what a blessing it must be to live on such comfortable terms with oneself."

Fipkins was very slovenly; no one would have tolerated a clerk with such a shock head of hair, except Old B.

But just as Bill Harker had begun to persuade himself that his love suit was in vain, and that his best plan was to try and forget a passion that appeared so hopeless, this brassy Fipkins was suddenly seized with the fever he was recovering from.

There was no mistaking the symptoms. Other motives might have induced Fipkins to have had his hair cut; but only love could have induced him to curl it. Those paper cuffs, clean even on a Saturday, were conclusive. If not, that reckless disregard of office hours in the morning, that restless looking at the clock in the evening, could not be mistaken.

Flowers, too! When did Fipkins care for flowers before?—while now the street Arabs watched for his coming.

Harker noted him narrowly. Would this cad be successful in the thorny, mazy paths of love?

He half despised himself for ever loving, if so vulgar a creature as this Fipkins could be smitten or could smite.

Weeks passed, slowly enough, Bill Harker thought. His dullness deepened. Do what he could, he found it useless to try and forget the fair unknown. A chance glimpse of her, at a concert he had gone to with an order, had revived his devotion in full force—he was all but spirit-broken.

He was drowsily writing one afternoon, when Fipkins said, suddenly—

"Bill, what's the name of that street that runs out of Leicester-square?—where those French fellows live that the governor wrote to last week about the patent! I know it well enough, but, for the life of me, I can't think of it."

"Do you mean — street?"

"Yes, of course. How stupid!"

"Now, what in the name of goodness does he ask that for?" said Bill Harker to himself, coming out of his drowsiness at once, and flushing all over, as if suddenly dipped into a warm bath.

A horrible suspicion darted into his mind. Could it, by all that was perverse, be possible that this creature, this insignificant piece of self-confidence, had, by any mischance, seen the nameless one?

"If I thought so," he muttered through his set teeth—"if I thought such a catastrophe possible, I would knock him over the head with the thickest ruler in the office, and nip his young affections in the bud, if I hung for it."

The innocent cause of his hidden wrath went out, after this silent declaration of goodwill, to post a letter—an unusual thing for him to do; and it did not escape Bill Harker's notice that the hateful Fipkins held the letter, as he passed his desk, so as to give him no chance of seeing the address.

The moment he had left the office, the jealous clerk bounded off his stool, and was soon standing by Fipkins' desk, looking intently at the blotting-pad he had been using.

It had been too long in use to reveal much; but in a kind of frenzy he traced "Miss," either "T" or "F," and something "square."

It was enough! Nay, too much! Fipkins, of all men in the world, was his rival, perhaps. Henceforth the beauty of Leicester-square might not only be lost to him, and be another's, but it had become a possibility that she might be induced to smile on Fipkins.

It was a fortunate thing for the entries in Old B.'s ledger that Bill Harker, in his excitement, forgot to take any ink, and scribbled away furiously with a dry pen when Fipkins returned.

How he controlled himself that day, he never knew;

but he did, and managed to be civil to the serpent Fipkins.

Then, when seven o'clock struck, or rather was striking, and Fipkins caught up his flowers from the bottle on his desk, set his glossy hat jauntily on his detestable head, and bade his fellow-clerk good night. Bill Harker followed him almost the moment he went out; and, as he felt instinctively would be the case, Fipkins made straight for Leicester-square, and went straight into the very boarding-house Harker had so often watched! But—and this staggered him—Fipkins went down the area steps, just as the potman might have done with beer, not at all like a gentlemanly suitor for the hand of the nameless one.

What could be the meaning of this? Was it a clandestine meeting? Scarcely so; for he had gone in with the assurance of a frequent or of an expected guest.

Poor Harker paced the street in agony.

What could he do?

To think of having his loved one snapped off in this atrocious manner galled him to the quick.

Wandering distractedly about, Bill Harker unfortunately did not see his rival leave the boarding-house, or he might probably have relieved his feelings by putting Fipkins' head "in Chancery." As it was, he waited and watched till he was weary, as well as drenched to the skin by the rain, which had been falling for some time. Then he raised the siege, and wearily trailed off to Camden Town, reaching his lodgings a little before daybreak.

"Is this yours?" said Old B., next day, as he carelessly picked up a lady's glove and threw it on Bill Harker's desk.

Had he dropped a bomb-shell over the old-fashioned railings, it would scarcely have disconcerted the clerk more than this simple article did. He quietly answered his employer in the negative; but the colour mounted to his pale cheeks, a wild light irradiated his glaring eyes.

"Mr. Fipkins, perhaps, has dropped it," he said, with more bitterness and meaning than so simple a suggestion appeared to call for.

Strange to say, Fipkins blushed too, as he repudiated all knowledge of it.

"Liar!" thought and nearly said Bill Harker, as he heard him speak.

Old B. toddled off to his specifications, and the glove was left lying unheeded, apparently, on Harker's desk, while he wrote on furiously.

Not till he was left alone in the office, nearly two hours after, did he touch the glove; but then he pressed it to his burning lips, he noted its dainty size—unused as he had once been to remark such matters—and observed that, though now redolent of tobacco, it had been scented. But, with a joy only to be appreciated by a lover, there, in this glove, flung as it were in his path by a secret rival, seemed to be the very clue he had been vainly seeking. The name was written in it, or a name. Whose should it be but hers—FOUSSI? That, coupled with the half legible F on the blotting-pad, he accepted as conclusive, poor fellow!—little dreaming in how many other gloves he could have found the same name. So now, then, he could write to her. And write he did, that same evening, at Camden Town, a

manly though passionate letter, detailing his love, his trials, his hopes, and last, if not so fully, his position.

This, duly addressed to "Miss Foussi," he posted, and waited with what fortitude he could muster for an answer.

He had need of patience. It was a week before he knew anything, and then his own letter came as a returned paid one from the Dead Letter Office; the envelope playfully annotated with "Try Fishy," "Not known," "? Fussy," "Try Leicester-st.," "Rd."—and so on.

Harker groaned. So near his object, yet so strangely baffled.

Oh, the agony of that week of suspense! A whole week gone—lost! And that horrid Fipkins so jubilant; day by day growing so luxurious in his habits; living on the fat of the land, if his lunches were a fair sample; talking so vulgarly about letting out his waistcoats—triumphing in such coarse fashion over him perpetually! Bah! he would bear it no longer. He felt it was maddening him. He would fly from the neighbourhood, before he was tempted to do something desperate.

Old B. was sorry, as well as surprised, to receive notice from Mr. Harker, and to find it in vain to try and learn from him the reason of his leaving.

"Are his accounts right?" he said to himself, as he thought over the matter.

They were strictly right; so Old B. and he parted pleasantly.

Bill Harker took a commission on the road. He visited the West of England. It was three months or more before he ventured to set his foot in London again.

The first time he did so, he encountered Fipkins, by accident, in Grove-road, Stockwell.

The rivals started. Their meeting was like the traditional one of the strange cats in the garret.

Fipkins' brass, for once, stood him in good stead. He was the first to speak. He held out his hand cordially.

"How are you, old fellow?" he said frankly, as if nothing was the matter. "Whoever would have thought of seeing you in this part of the world?"

Harker did not strike him, did not repel his friendly advances. In truth, Time had smoothed off the raw edges of his wound. And then, Fipkins looked so happy, he hadn't the heart to distress him.

They adjourned to the nearest bar, and, in the course of a series of "refreshers," Fipkins told of his intended marriage, which was to take place the next week, at St. Giles's Church, Camberwell.

It grated on Harker's feelings to notice that Fipkins in some sort looked upon the union as a sacrifice.

"There are property considerations," he said several times, in a half maudlin sort of way—"property considerations, my boy; and folks can't afford to lose sight of those in hard times like these."

Mercenary wretch! How Harker despised him, even while he fraternized with him! What a strange power the fellow always had over him!—he could neither understand nor escape from it. He found it hard to realize, after Fipkins had left him, that he had actually been weak enough to promise to be his "best man" at the wedding. But it was so; there was the entry in his own order book—in an unsteady hand—that

Fipkins had insisted on his writing at the bar. He had not the courage to decline it, and, as he had promised, honour and curiosity both prompted him to see the drama to the end.

As the two ex-clerks stood waiting for the bride's arrival on the auspicious morning, one might have heard Harker's heart throb: it beat like a drum with intense excitement.

But astonishment overpowered every other feeling when, as the bride entered the church, a perfect mountain of finery, he recognized in her the dragon-like, fiery-faced boarding-house proprietress, and knew that it was she that Fipkins had chosen from "property considerations."

Confused as he felt, Harker could understand that in her case, weighty as she was, something in the shape of a bonus would be acceptable.

He had little time to think of all this, however; for the first bridesmaid, he found, to his great joy, was the nameless one!

Her white-gloved little hand rested on his trembling arm as they walked down the aisle after the ceremony, in the wake of Mr. and Mrs. Fipkins; and before they reached the hotel where the breakfast was laid he had discovered, amongst other things, that his fair companion's name was not Foussi, but Castleton.

"I am sorry," said Fipkins, a few weeks later, "that I cannot be your best man; but *she* objects to it, and to everything, for the matter of that." Then he added, gaily—"It ought to be a bachelor. Ask Old B. He would be delighted—nothing would please him better."

Mr. Brown was genuinely pleased; but, in a sort of confusion common with him just then, he mistook the day, and went on Thursday instead of Tuesday. Fipkins, at a pinch, braved the wrath of the fiery partner of his bosom, and was Harker's best man after all.

Harker still calls his model of a wife Foussi; but the glove he had treasured did not fit her. Old B., who picked it up, might first have dropped it. One thing is certain—he astonished every one by marrying, before the year was out, a mere child; and her hand, as it rested in his on the wedding day, looked small enough to have been his daughter's.

Our Cold-blooded Pet.

I WAS just over sixteen when the *Ajax* landed me on the coast of Malabar safe and sound, after a fair passage of five months' duration, our vessel—though according to the captain's eulogy, firm and substantial as a rock—not being one of the fastest sailers, and requiring a strong gale to enable her to accomplish a regular six knots.

However, it had brought us to Alipee, and as that seaport may not be familiar to my readers, I will try and give some idea of it in a few words.

Imagine, then, a low coast, with absolutely no shelter for vessels, and, hidden amongst the trees, about a hundred Indian huts; and you have a picture of the place. No hotel, no baths; for visitors do not come to Alipee on a pleasure trip.

One evening, as I was sitting on the deck of the *Ajax*, trying to catch some of the sea-snakes which abound in this sea, the captain, who had been mixing

himself a glass of grog, according to his own recipe—that is to say, containing as much rum and as little water as possible—came up to me, and clapped me on the shoulder.

"What should you say," he asked me, "if I were to take you to-morrow to hunt alligators?"

"I should say," I replied, checking my instinctive start of delight, "that I have no gun."

This was quite true; for my gun, to my great grief, had been forgotten on leaving home, and I possessed nothing in the way of arms but a pair of small pistols, excellent in their way, but certainly not suited for alligator hunting.

"Oh, if that's all," said the captain, "the daubatchy will get you a dozen."

The daubatchy in India is a general purveyor provided by nature. He is found everywhere, and furnishes everything. He it is who supplies vessels with provisions of every kind, which, however, does not interfere with his selling pearls, shell boxes, polish for one's boots, and oil for the hair. As soon as you land, the daubatchy takes charge of you, takes you to see the lions of the place, orders your supper, finds a lodging for you—in short, relieves you of every responsibility.

To this individual, therefore, I applied at once, and, without the slightest hesitation, was promised a gun by three the next morning, at which hour we were to set off.

I knew that the man would just as soon have promised me a heavy field-piece; and therefore, remembering the scanty resources of the place, I retired to rest rather uneasy on the subject of my weapon. I slept scarcely long enough to dream that I was engaged with an enormous beast, half frog, half dragon, which must be an alligator. In the natural order of things in dreams, my gun missed fire; I attempted an ignominious escape, but my limbs seemed paralysed; and then the horrible beast, opening an enormous mouth, seized me before I could take a step.

The cabin boy, coming to call me, rescued me from this fearful position, a service for which I am grateful to him to this day.

Five minutes later, I was off with the captain in a boat peculiar to the district, somewhat resembling a Venetian gondola, and rowed by six Indians.

"Your gun is in the boat with the captain's," said the daubatchy, as I passed him to go over the side.

Set at rest on this matter, I rested lazily in my place as we steadily approached the shore. At about five o'clock we entered a small river, the mouth of which, hidden by the trees, had not been visible from the ship.

Never had I seen such a charming little river. Scarcely more than twenty yards wide, it had made itself a passage through the jungle; and, the foliage interlacing over our heads, we ascended the little stream for two leagues without seeing the sun for an instant. The slanting morning rays gave the most lovely tints to this mass of verdure; but it was only at long intervals that one of them pierced the foliage to strike the dark surface of the water.

Our Indians accompanied the sound of the oars with a wild but plaintive song, which was immediately heard repeated at some distance, evidently from another boat, which we soon met and passed without the rowers on either side interrupting their song for an instant.

It is many years since that trip; but that wild, inde-

scribable air still rings in my ears. Mingling with the warblings and cries of thousands of birds, it seemed made expressly for the scene, which it rendered yet more attractive.

But we soon had to leave this delightful district; for we had not come to study nature, but to hunt caymans. At about eight o'clock, we emerged from this channel of flowers and foliage, and found ourselves on one side of an immense marsh, of which we could not distinguish the extent. This was our hunting-ground; and the game we were looking for had room enough in which to enjoy plenty of liberty.

We were at once made aware of its presence by the howling of an unfortunate cow, which, having had the

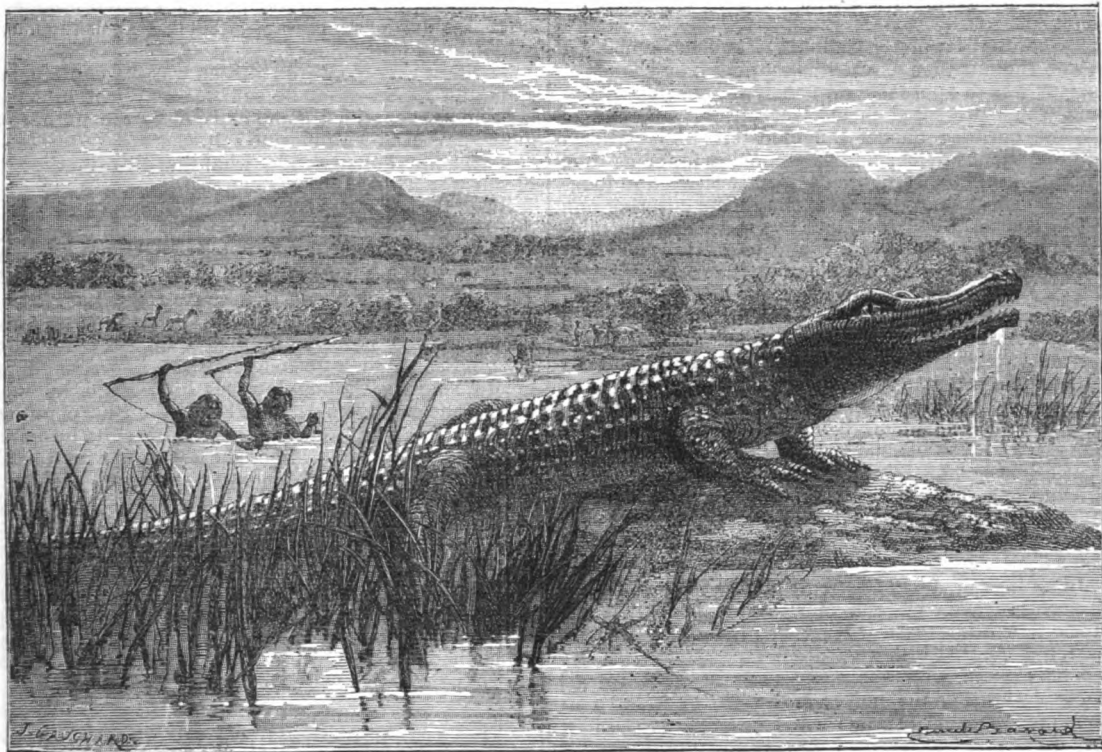
the captain, handing me my gun, to which I had as yet paid no attention.

Good heavens, what a machine that gun was! Picture to yourself an old military musket, a hole rusted through the barrel, and stuck on, and rusted to the end, so that it was impossible to remove it—a bayonet!

The faithful provider, for fear of accidents, had carefully rebound the barrel to the stock, but quite forgotten to see that there was a lock. Under the circumstances, it would have been just as wise to have left the piece behind.

Seeing my blank looks, the captain tried to console me by saying, in his most persuasive tones—

"The bayonet has always been a most serviceable



"DRIVEN OUT OF THE SHALLOW WATER."—Page 160.

imprudence to bathe her feet, had been caught by the legs.

The spot where this had taken place was too far distant for us to be able to save the poor beast, even if we could have taken our boat into such shallow water, which was, however, quite impossible.

We had to make a long circuit, and soon saw the poor cow drawn farther and farther under water, and at last disappear entirely; and though this was sad enough for the poor animal, it was so far satisfactory to us that it showed us that we had not been misinformed, and that these marshes were really inhabited by the great reptiles of which we were in search.

"Now is the time to get our weapons ready," said

weapon, and one less likely to miss its aim than a bullet; besides, there's certainly novelty as well as excitement in hunting alligators with fixed bayonets."

This was unanswerable; and the same instant our Indians began to row very gently and cautiously, and pointed out to us, just in front of the boat, what appeared to me to be a tuft of rushes floating on the surface of the water. As we neared them, however, I quickly perceived my mistake. It was an alligator of about twenty feet long, apparently asleep.

I do not intend to give a detailed or scientific description of this animal; for everybody knows that the alligator, like the crocodile, is an enormous lizard, capable of eating any one who may fall in his way.

His scales, which are very hard and thick, render him almost invulnerable, except on the under-part and at the joints of his fore-feet.

The one before us only showing his back, we had very little chance of wounding him; and while we were still about fifty yards distant, the cunning monster, which no doubt had only been sleeping with one eye, watched us for an instant with the other, and then quietly sank to the bottom.

However, as he did this in a very slow and dignified fashion, the captain had time to send a bullet, to rebound from his great head; and being extremely desirous to do something, I discharged both my pistols at him. However, our united efforts caused the creature so little uneasiness, that he had not even the curiosity to come up again to see who we were, and what we wanted.

"Well, that's a pretty beginning!" we exclaimed.

The Indians then assured us that our only chance of success was to approach cautiously the tongues of dry land which presented themselves at intervals, and to try and surprise one of the monsters whilst asleep. We took their advice; and after looking for some time without result, the captain at length succeeded in lodging a bullet in the vulnerable part of the covering of a large alligator, which we found taking a nap in the middle of a great lagoon of moss and herbage. But monsters like these are seldom killed by the first shot; and this one, making a dart forward on being roused, glided into the water, leaving behind him only a slight stain of blood on the grass.

This convinced us that it was absurd to continue our pursuit of the great reptiles under such unfavourable conditions, and, giving up all hope of larger game, we landed, and pressed forwards towards a flock of tall birds which were visible at a little distance, and from their bright colour seemed to be of the flamingo family.

All at once, and just in time to prevent my setting my foot upon him as I advanced, I caught sight of a lovely young alligator, about a yard and a half long, fast asleep amongst the rushes.

In an instant, I had seized my gun by the barrel, and directed such a vigorous blow at his head that the stock flew into atoms, leaving in my hand a battered barrel, decorated with a bayonet.

The captain, who was a few steps in front, turned back on hearing the noise; and between us we had soon made fast our prisoner with ropes round his throat and claws.

He submitted to this operation with a stupefied air, and watched us through his half-closed eyes, like a young alligator who had just seen thirty-six thousand candles; but a few minutes later, he struggled violently in the boat, while we set about returning to the vessel.

We moved rapidly down the charming river which we had ascended in the morning, this time amidst a profound silence—there was neither a sound in the wood nor the cry of a bird in the air.

A young kid, incautiously peeping at us through the brambles, was at once shot down, for hunters are without mercy; and in the evening his flesh was pronounced capital, served with an excellent white sauce, which caused the cook to be generally complimented.

As for the alligator, he was placed in a large tub, half full of water, and we began at once to teach him how to behave. In the morning, when the deck was

being washed, he was set at liberty, and, saving a slight predilection for the calves of the crew, he behaved admirably.

He ate anything—scraps of meat, fish, and vegetables, not even despising cat's-meat, as our poor old Tom found to his cost; for, being found asleep in the sun, he was swallowed like a pill.

The captain was delighted, and already in imagination saw his name published as having imported a choice specimen for the Zoological Gardens, when one fine morning (unpleasant things always happen on fine mornings), while our *protégé* was pensively making the round of the deck, he passed one of the port-holes. Scarcely had he caught sight of his favourite element, when, without giving himself time for reflection, without thinking of what he owed to us for all our kindness, he took a header, and disappeared, leaving us too much astonished to move.

The first who recovered himself was the captain, but I will not repeat what he said. I may just hint that his remark contained some allusion to the nether regions, flavoured with marine salt.

By the way, I often wonder what that alligator thought of salt water.

Since that time I have hunted alligators and crocodiles in various parts of the world; my last experience of the kind having been in Brazil, where, after having tried in vain, for some time, to take an exceptionally huge crocodile in some shallows up the La Plata, I gave up the chase in despair. The two Indians who were with me, however, loth to abandon our quarry after having had it so long in sight, approached the creature again, wading towards him, aided by their staves, and holding over their heads their harpoon-like spears. The great saurian allowed himself to be driven out of the shallow water where he lay, on to a mud bank, over which he crawled, rolling his hideous eyes in a horrible manner, till the natives, on getting near enough, hurled their harpoons, one of which glanced off the brute's coat of mail, while the other took effect in his hide, but gave way in the struggles he made, and the huge creature, gliding off the mud, disappeared in deep water, without attempting to turn on his pursuers, apparently looking on their efforts with the same contempt which had been shown to the captain and myself by his Indian relative many years before.

My Adventures with a Highwayman.

CHAPTER III.

I JOGGED along pretty well for the rest of my journey, until within about seven miles of Hull, when I saw a mounted man approaching; and my heart began to beat rapidly—not, I think, exactly with fear, but excitement. I will not pretend to be so brave that I was not somewhat alarmed; for it is no light thing to be the special bearer of money that is not one's own—to know that your future success in life depends on the manner in which you carry out your mission. Besides, there was a lady in the case; and I could not have returned beaten, and stripped of the money.

I saw my stranger approaching me; but just at the same time, from behind, there came a couple of carriages, and three horsemen by their side; so I timed myself to pass the stranger just at the same time, and,

highwayman or not, I got well by him without any interruption, and did not hesitate to spur my nag, and got on as fast as possible.

I reached Hull in safety, and placed the valise in the hands of the partners, who shook me heartily by the hand.

"You've done well, my lad," said one. "Mr. Manby was rather rash to send you alone. There have been several robberies lately; in fact, the road has got an unenviable name."

"I suppose," said the other, smiling, "you know that you would have been a pretty good prize?"

"I know I had money there, sir," I said; "but not how much."

"Fifteen hundred guineas, my lad—all in gold," said the second partner. "It was a ticklish charge."

"Faith, sir," I said, "I'm glad I did not know. It was lucky that fellow who followed, and tried to stop me, failed."

And then I told them my adventure, and also about the second mounted man, whom I had been rather afraid to meet.

They then entertained me uncommonly well, seeming in high glee; and I began to suspect that my prompt coming had relieved them of some monetary pressure, for they shook hands with me, shook hands with one another, and said I must be their guest that night at dinner, and sleep there.

The consequence was that we had a very snug bachelor dinner, after which the elder partner made me a sign, and, having rung for a flat candlestick, took me down, with a great deal of form and ceremony, to a big oaken door, which he unlocked with a great key, and then took me in among the sawdust to a particular bin, from which he took down a bottle.

"Only for particular occasions," he said, laughing, and nodding his head. "This is one. And, hark ye, Richard Hollis, my friend, don't be affronted at my little present—here are ten guineas for you."

I protested, and said there was no need; but he turned upon me sharply—

"Nonsense, man!—take it. There, mind what you are doing, or you will shake the wine. Put it in your pocket, or I shall be annoyed."

So, after all, feeling that I was only being paid for a service in which, perhaps, I had risked my life, I took the ten guineas, and dropped them one by one into my fob as we went back to the dining-room.

"I'll go and decant this myself," said the elder partner.

And he took the port wine, and left me with the other, who, as soon as we were alone, stretched out his hand, thanked me for having done them a very great service, and ended by begging my acceptance of ten guineas.

"But, my dear sir," I said—"your partner has just presented me with the like amount."

"I'm very glad of it, Hollis; it shows the unanimity of opinion in this case. Take it, my dear lad—save it up; you may want it some day, when you are about to be wed. It will do to make the lady a present."

He was so earnest and pressing, that I took the money, and after spending a very pleasant evening with them, I went to bed—first of all, though, taking out the money, and with the point of my penknife making a cross on each guinea, as a mark to show that they were

not to be spent, but kept for nest-eggs, to coax more to their side.

I slept well, dreaming of little Nelly, and was up sometimes in the morning; but I soon found that I should not get away before midday—dinner-time—last night's late hours having been in my honour. So I amused myself as best I could, and waited till after dinner; but even then the letters and accounts I was to carry back were not ready.

"It will be late before you start, my lad," said the partners; "but you will have no money to carry this time, so it will not matter."

It was about six o'clock, after a hearty meal, that they placed the packet in my hands; and I strapped it in the empty valise, and secured that, again, at the end of the crupper.

"It's a long ride for you, my lad—eight and twenty miles; but your horse is fresh, and has had all the corn he could eat. You'll be home before midnight."

"I hope so," I said, as I mounted.

And, after a cheery farewell, I started, one of the partners calling after me that the moon would soon be up.

"Well," thought I, as I cantered along, "I can laugh at the highwaymen now, without they want my letters."

Then, for the first time, I thought of my twenty guineas; and it seemed now to have grown a much more valuable sum than I had brought the day before in my valise.

It grew dark, but I knew the road well; and what with thinking of having well done my task, of the friendly welcome that would await me, and also whether Nelly would have gone to bed, or be sitting up on the chance of seeing me when I got back, the miles ran away beneath my horse's feet.

I did not pay much heed to it when the road sank down between two high banks, and was shaded with trees to such an extent that the way beneath was very dark. I was thinking of Nelly, and Nelly only, and her soft, sweet face, when, in the gloomiest part, a mounted man suddenly started out before me, and seized my rein, at the same time presenting a pistol full at my face.

"Your money," he said, in a hoarse voice.

And as I looked in his face, it was to see that he wore a black mask, which effectually concealed his features.

I had my loaded pistols, and, for a moment, I thought of making a struggle to use them; but I felt that if I attempted such a thing the scoundrel would fire; and, again, though I was ready enough to fire in defence of my master's property, I did not feel disposed to run the risk of taking life for the sake of those few guineas of my own.

The scoundrel must have divined my thoughts, for he pressed the muzzle of his pistol close up against my cheek, and I must say that it proved more effectual than any words; for though I was boiling over with indignation, I slowly thrust my hand into my pocket, and handed the twenty guineas over to my rascally assailant.

"Now, your watch," he said, sharply, "or by all that's blue—"

"I haven't one," I exclaimed.

But he did not believe me, and searched and pulled me about in a way that made me, twenty times over, long to have at him in fair fight.

"You've more money, then," he exclaimed, savagely. "Hand it out, or, by all that's blue, you won't live to tell this tale."

"I tell you, I have no more," I said, as fiercely as he spoke himself; "but I have a couple of pistols."

"I know you have," said the scoundrel, drawing out one and then the other, cocking them, discharging them in the air, and then replacing them. "Now, ride on," he said, pointing towards Hull, "and think yourself lucky to get on so well as you have."

I trotted sulkily off, feeling half mad with myself because I had yielded all up without a struggle; and at the end of a few hundred yards, I stopped, loaded my pistols, turned and galloped back, meaning, now I was prepared, to encounter my friend, if I could, and make him disgorge.

I reached the spot where he had attacked me, but he had gone; and though I hung about the place for an hour, on the chance of his return, which was hardly likely, I saw no more of him; so I rode on once more, reckoning that this adventure would hinder me at least two hours.

Misfortunes seldom come singly. I had not gone a mile, before "click!"—my horse cast a shoe, and instead of a canter I had to go at a walk, the horse going very lamely; so much so, in fact, that about a mile farther I was glad to draw up at a very decent inn, and call for the ostler.

"Any shoeing-smith hereabout?" I said.

"There's one about a mile away, in the village, sir," the man said; "but he'll be gone to bed by now."

"What's to be done?" I said. "My horse has cast a shoe—I can't get on to York."

"You'll see no York to-night, sir," said the man.

"It's a good twenty mile; and with a lame horse!"

"We've good accommodation, sir," said a woman's voice, and I saw a pleasant-faced landlady in the doorway—"good beds, sir—supper, sir. Hadn't you better stay?"

I could see no alternative; so I gave up my horse to the man, and went in.

"Nice roads, these of yours," I said, savagely. "Here have I been robbed, within a mile or two of your house, by a highwayman."

"You don't say so, sir!" exclaimed the woman.

"Indeed I do," I said; "but I shall have him traced. Fortunately, every guinea was marked, and I can swear to them again."

The woman bustled out of the room, and I sat warming myself at a pretty good fire; and soon afterwards she brought in my supper, after which I began to grow reconciled to my position. I gave orders that as early as possible my horse should be taken to be shod, and was sitting thinking of bed, and of how much I disliked sleeping in a strange place, when there was a knock at the door, and the landlord—who had not attended on me before—entered the room, and stood looking at me in a curious, hesitating fashion.

"What is it?" I said.

"I'm the landlord, sir," said the man, "and I wanted to see you about something you said to my wife when you came."

"What, about being robbed?" I said.

"Exactly, sir."

"Well, what about it?"

"Well, sir," said the man, "I've been sitting smok-

ing my pipe in my kitchen the last hour, thinking over it."

"Much better go and catch the thief," I said, laughing.

"Yes, sir—perhaps so," he said; "but, then, thieves are sometimes caught by stopping at home, and letting them come to you."

"What do you mean?" I said, growing interested.

"Well, sir," said the landlord, "there's been no less than ten gentlemen robbed lately, between here and there, by a highwayman in a black mask."

"Well, that must be the same man who stopped me."

"No doubt of it, sir; and a pity the wretch isn't gibbeted. And what should you say if I said I've found the man?"

"I should say you had done well. But whom do you suspect?"

"I'll tell you directly, sir, after I've shown you how I've been led up to it. Three times lately I've noticed that my horse has seemed out of sorts, looking worn out and done up, when his work has been easy, just as if some one had been galloping him about. Then, one night late, I caught my man, Jennings, coming from the stable; and when I questioned him he turned sulky, and wouldn't speak."

"That proves nothing," I said, testily.

"No, sir; but it leads up to it. He was out to-night, sir; and I found my old black just now in the stables, all of a lather. Then I sent Jennings out to get the change for a guinea, and he comes back, after being gone long enough up the village, and gives me the guinea back, saying he couldn't get it changed. You said as your guineas were marked, sir—how was that?"

"With a small cross," I said, "close to the neck of the head."

"So's this, sir," said the landlord, drawing a guinea from his pocket, and holding it out with an aspect of loathing, as if it had been stained and slippery with blood.

I took the guinea, held it to the light, and, sure enough, there was the cross upon it that I had made the day before. I was sure of it, because it was marked precisely as I had taken pains to mark it, with one limb of the cross ending in the angle at the junction of the chin and neck.

"That's one of them," I said, looking at the landlord.

"I thought it was, sir," said the man. "I took that guinea out by chance like, as I sat thinking about the robberies, and you saying the money was marked, and there it was."

"Then where are the others?" I said.

"Well, sir," said the man, reluctantly, "I do not like to accuse anybody, I only tell you what I know. As to where the other guineas are, if I wanted them, I should say they were in the pocket that that one came from."

"And what's the man's name?" I said, eagerly.

"Jennings, sir."

"And where is he?"

"Oh, he's up in his bed-room, over the kitchen; he went up to bed drunk as ever I did see a man, and he must have been getting a lot of drink in the village. You wouldn't think it, sir, but if he's got sixpence to spend at all, he never spends it here, but goes to some other house."

"Let's go up, and search him," I said; "we may find the money."

"No—no, sir," said the landlord; "I'm not going to mix myself up in the matter. There's Abe Dancer, the village constable, though, sir, close at hand, and if you like, I'll send for him."

"Do, then," I said.

And he left the room, to return in about five minutes with the constable—a bald-faced, determined man, although only a shoemaker by trade, as I could see by his hands.

"Now, look here," said the landlord, deprecatingly, "I'm not doing this, mind. It's this gentleman's doing, and he's going to carry it out, but not me."

"Show us the room," said the constable, "and bring a light. You'll have to be a witness, anyhow."

"No—no; I shan't have anything to do with it at all," he said.

And he kept on remonstrating, as he led the way up to the loft-like bedroom, where a man was lying in his clothes upon a trundle bed, breathing heavily, and undoubtedly very drunk.

The constable now went up and shook him, but the fellow was speechlessly gone in liquor, and shaking had no effect upon him whatever. So the constable began to search his clothes; and, after a few moments, brought out of one of his breeches pockets a handful of guineas.

I started forward, for I had been watching the search very anxiously—the highwayman seeming by his build to be, as well as I could tell, much such a fellow as the man before us.

Sure enough, there were my guineas—nineteen of them—and one besides, which did not belong to me.

My Fly.

COME hither, fly, that on my window-pane
Dost climbing fall, and falling, climb again;
Thus, while I catch you—stay, don't kick about so—
Tell me, I pray, why wish you to get out so?
Is it to soar aloft and warm your wings
At the bright sun? Ah, flies are foolish things!
You've a fine life, if but the fact you knew—
Plenty to eat, and no hard work to do.
Cream you make free with, nor e'en "Thank you" say
for it;

Sugar you nibble, nor are asked to pay for it.
Tho' you've got three feet for each one I use,
You neither buy, nor pay for mending shoes;
And tho' you wander thro' each room's extent,
You fear no tax-man and you pay no rent.

How would you fare, now, if I let you out?
Rude winds would blow your fragile form about;
A spider's gossamer, perchance, would follow you;
Perchance a swallow overtake and swallow you;
A rain-drop might o'erwhelm you, or a leaf
Blown from a tree bring you to early grief;
But, as to soaring to the sun—Tut, tut!
You'd likelier perish in the water-butt.

Yet—as I think on't—equal folly's mine:
Thankless for what I have, I still repine
For what I've not; and which, if once possessed,
Doubtless would leave my heart as far from rest.

Reality's my window-pane, and Hope
Still climbs, and falls, and frets to see it ope.
Yes, and in more than this, 'twixt me and you,
Men are like flies—for men are insects, too.
Little in mind, howe'er our bodies run—
(Shade of Sam Johnson, pardon me the pun!)—
We're all in sects: in sects that hate each other,
And deem it love of God to hate one's brother.

Now, go about your buzziness, good fly;
Be wiser, and, I promise, so will I.
The air was cold, and leaves were falling fast,
And days were shortening, when I saw you last;
But now you come, the herald of the bright,
Long, sunny day and tranquil moony night.
You bring us promise of the bee and flower,
The meadow's breath, the genial summer shower,
The bird's sweet song, the echoing air that fills,
And the sweet trickling music of the rills.
You're welcome, then, since tidings such you bring,
And, as your recompense, be free of wing;
Walk when I'm busy on my nose's tip,
With your six legs tickle my itching lip;
Swim in my tea—but warning take of fools
Who've perished so, and see that first it cools;
Nibble my sugar and my print of butter;
Walk on my loaf—still no complaint I'll utter.
Only one thing I warn you not to try—
Oft for that one I've wished to be a fly!—
Come not too near Carissima, nor dare
To kiss her eyelids or caress her hair.
But if you must come near her, pray, good fly,
Tell her how much I love her. There, good-bye!

The Egotist's Note-book.

FASHION follows us to the grave, and it is frequently more difficult to settle the etiquette of a funeral than to arrange the order of precedence at a county ball. In less æsthetic times, a few simple flowers planted about the grave of the little one we had loved and lost were considered the most suitable and touching tribute of affection; but *nous avons changé tout cela*. The following query, inserted in a fashionable weekly contemporary last week, shows the progress we have made in these matters:—

"I should be obliged if any experienced Continental traveller will inform me as to the various shrubs, &c., employed abroad for planting round a child's grave; whether pine, willow, or cypress would be suitable; also for hints as to effective and original decoration of the grave."

Election agents in England are thought to be smart, but their brethren over "the herring pond" can teach them a thing or two. The negro, it seems, has a peculiar horror of dissection, and the Democratic papers are said to be filled with stories that the Republicans, under pretence of obtaining his vote, really want him for hospital purposes. A short time since, in Indianapolis, the bodies of two negroes were actually dug up, and placed, as if by mistake, in a cellar adjoining the hospital, where, of course, they were discovered by a black man. There was a terrible scare among the black population, which was not diminished by an incident that happened shortly afterwards. As a negro was walking down a

quiet street at dusk, a sack was suddenly drawn over his head, and he was carried in the direction of the hospital, his captors dropping by the way ominous remarks as to his approaching fate. Of course, he escaped just in the nick of time, but the event spread dismay among the negroes; and to make matters worse for the Republicans, by awakening suspicion, the party organs took up the affair, and denounced it as "another outrage upon the coloured race."

Apropos of American elections, it has been found necessary to invent quite a vocabulary in order to meet the various exigencies that from time to time arise. "Carpet-baggers" we were quite familiar with, but now we are treated to "repeaters," "plug-uglies," "ballot-box stuffers," "blood-tubs," "shoulder-hitters," *cum multis aliis*. Fancy, after we have adopted the American institution of female suffrage, applying a few of these elegant epithets to one's spinster aunt! How would she like to be a "plug-ugly," for instance?

The Metropolitan Board of Works has just adopted a series of proposals for effecting street improvements in the metropolis, at a cost of £4,213,950. Several members protested against such an enormous expenditure; but they were altogether outvoted. Like Artemus Ward, in fitting up his lecture hall at New York, the majority care nothing for the expense, and are determined to keep up with the times, if they spend the last sixpence the ratepayers have got.

Here's a sweet little thing for a nice young clergyman in search of a living:—

"ADVOWSON for sale, in a beautiful and healthy part of Somersetshire. Society very good. Net income close upon £500 a year, besides a most excellent rectory house close to the church. Church just restored, six bells, fine tower, beautifully painted glass. A High Churchman preferred. Immediate possession. Apply," &c.

There ought to be plenty of bidders for such a desirable cure of souls, with its Christian-like attractions of six bells, beautifully painted glass, £500 a year, and "very good" society.

I was horrified the other day, while riding on the "knife-board" of an omnibus, by reading in a shop window the following announcement—Blank's "Guinea Jaw"! Now, one is obliged to read the shop windows as one rides "outside," and I protest against such striking placards: they are blood-freezing, and suggest terrible accidents, shattered processes, hospitals, bandages, blood, and terrors illimitable, instead of the support for false teeth supplied by an enterprising dentist.

It has been announced that a ceremony will be performed at Notre Dame de Lorette, of a sufficiently painful nature to attract a large crowd. The Marquis de Prégalee, aged 85 years, will be married to Mdlle. Herbert, aged 17 only. Now, for an enterprising marrying man, who is not troubled with the antipathy of Mr. Weller, senior, to widows, there should certainly arise, within the next twenty years, an eligible opportunity for espousing a lady of title. Sam Weller once expressed himself as intending to marry "a female markis."

One learns from the police court reports that the

tramway companies exact a deposit from their conductors of five pounds, as a guarantee of their honesty. It would be much more pleasant for the public if the companies would also exact a guarantee that their men should not eat onions. Almost before one has taken one's seat, in comes the conductor for the fare, and his visits are frequent; while as to the iodized odour of the bulbous, many-coated vegetable—as a young lady I once knew used to say, even as an Italian uses his *altro*—"Oh, my!"

Didst see, oh public, the disloyal conduct of the alligator at the Royal Aquarium? If not, learn that when he was allowed to seek his watery home in the presence of the Prince of Wales, he wagged his tail. Alligators will wag their tails; but this one, it is said, splashed his Royal Highness even as if he would christen him; while the reverse was the case: the Prince christening the saurian bold, and giving him the name by which he goes.

Sixty-four pounders are much more ancient than has been supposed; for, according to the *Daily News* of November 7, in its account of the artillery practice, shells are mentioned as passing "three hundred years in rear of the screen battery," and yet they burst on November 6th of this present year! What tremendous fuses they must have had to burn so long! And the question arises, why did the gunners of 1576 fire those shells? Surely, we never did them any harm. The only solution that offers itself is—did the compositor put years instead of yards?

Who would not be "a citizen of credit and renown"? Here is one of their customs, as observed at the office of the Queen's Remembrancer, Chancery-lane:—"The Queen's Remembrancer then ordered that the warrants be filed and recorded; and that done, proclamation was made, according to custom, in the following terms:—"Tenants and occupiers of a piece of waste ground called The Moors, in the county of Salop, come forth and do your service." The City solicitor then cut one fagot with a hatchet, and another with a billhook. That done, further proclamation was next made as follows:—"Tenants and occupiers of a certain tenement called The Forge, in the parish of St. Clement Danes, in the county of Middlesex, come forth and do your service." Then the City solicitor counted six horse-shoes and sixty-one nails; the Queen's Remembrancer as usual, at the conclusion of the ceremony, saying "Good number." With that this quaint proceeding, which has been annually observed since a long time beyond the memory of man, was brought to an end, and the civic authorities took their leave.

IN a country tour, ladies who take very little exercise when at home, with true British courage often undertake long and tedious journeys. It is of the highest importance, under such circumstances, that the clothing should in no way impede the proper circulation of the blood, but especially should the old but bad practice of gartering the leg be avoided. Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London, has provided the only means of remedying this in his New Patent Stocking Suspender, which he will send by post for 2d. extra. The prices are—Children's, 1s. 6d.; maids', 2s.; ladies', 3s.

Three Hundred Virgins.

A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS.

CHAPTER IV.—IN ROUGH WEATHER.

THE voyage was prosperous; the hot band of the tropics was passed, and day by day the weather grew cooler, as they seemed to sail out of summer into autumn; and then, as they reached Cape Horn, autumn gave way slowly to winter, with short days and cold rain storms; the wind at times blowing keenly, as if coming from glaciers in the far south. The pleasant idlings upon the deck were at an end, and the greater part of the time was spent below, in shelter from the beating waves and blinding rain.

Then came gales, with heavy drifting flakes of snow; and the waves, striking against the starboard and port bow of the ship to break, leaped on board and deluged the decks.

The awnings had disappeared long since, and officers and men stalked the deck in oilskins; while Charles Helston went from the cabin below, and from thence to his medical stores, with an anxious face; for he had a heavy responsibility, and his "people," as he called them, were longing for a change.

It was one afternoon, and the great ship was heavily ploughing her way through the murky seas, with a dull, yellow haze all around, seeming to shut the vessel in, while squalls of cutting, sleety rain dashed upon her every now and then, as if the gods of the mysterious southern seas they were penetrating resented their approach, and strove to drive them back. A dull thud every now and then told of the blow given by some taller wave that broke against the bows, and, after deluging the fore-part of the vessel, dripped from bowsprit and figure-head, and streamed from the scuppers.

As a rule, though bending under close-reefed storm sails, the *Zenobia* well answered her helm, and was eased over the heavier billows, riding up one great, dull, green hill, to hang for a moment suspended on the summit, and then go plunging down, down the other side, as if never to rise again.

There was only the watch on deck, with a couple of men stationed at the wheel; for the night had been a heavy one, and the weary captain and sailors were snatching a few hours' rest below. Laurent was the officer in charge; and, cased from head to foot in oilskins, he was gazing straight ahead into the murk, when he was accosted by Helston.

"Ah, doctor, you on deck? Hadn't you better go below?"

"Not till I've had a little fresh air," said Helston.

"None to be had," said Laurent. "It's all as salt as brine."

"Better than the foul, close, mephitic vapour below," said Helston. "I want you to see to this. Can we not have a hatch or two off? Something more done for ventilation?"

"You can have hatches off if you wish to have cold water instead of bad air. Why, man, we're shipping seas every five minutes; and if we took the hatches off we should be waterlogged. Look at that!"

As if to endorse his words, the great ship just then seemed to rise at a green hill of water, and then to stumble, plunging right into the wave, which leaped

over the bows and deluged the deck, setting casks and coops afloat, until it found a way out at the sides.

"There would have been a ton or two of water for you, doctor. I don't think your damsels would have been delighted to have that come swishing down amongst them."

"Oh, no, you're quite right," said Helston, frankly; "but it's very bad for them below there. We shall have no end of sickness directly; and the poor things are growing terribly impatient."

"Women-like," said Laurent. "Well, we'll do the best we can for them, and the moment the sea subsides they can come on deck."

"Where are we now?" said Helston.

"As far south as we have to go. We have rounded the Horn, doctor, and begin running west directly. A few days and we shall be entering genial climes again, sailing into the Pacific, and getting sunshine and soft winds, in place of this atrocious weather. What's that?"

"Sounds like a hammering at the hatch," said Helston.

The two young men walked to the entrance of the women's cabin, and there the knocking was redoubled, the hatch being secured on the deck side.

"Well, what is it?" said Laurent, removing the fastening, and, taught by experience in such weather, holding the hatch a very little way open, ready to clap it to again.

The answer came in the shape of the head of Deborah Burrows, which she thrust out with her shoulders, and struggled to get further, but could not for the hatch.

"Here, take away this trap-door thing," she cried, angrily. "I want to come on deck."

"You can't come now," said Laurent, quietly; "you must keep below."

"Take away your hand; let me come up," said Deborah, angrily. "I did not come on board here to be made a prisoner."

"You must be a prisoner, Mrs. Burrows, while this weather lasts," said Laurent, firmly. "You cannot come on deck."

"But I will come on deck," said Deborah, angrily, and with her voice rising in pitch. "It's disgraceful, it's murderous. Are we to be kept below there, and stifled for want of air? Do you hear, below? They won't let me go up."

There was a murmur of women's voices heard from below in answer to this appeal.

"My good woman," said Laurent, quietly, "go down. The orders are that none of you are to come on deck in this storm; so go down."

"I won't go down," cried Deborah. "Help me below there, let's force our way on deck!"

And she struggled violently to get out.

"Why, you silly woman," cried Laurent, losing patience, "it's for your good we want you to stay."

"It's not—it's oppression—it's cruelty—it's murderous treatment!" cried Deborah, fiercely. "Help—help—they are hurting me!"

"You are hurting yourself, Deborah Burrows," said Helston, firmly. "Go down directly. Where is Mrs. Kent?" he shouted at the opening.

"I shall not go down to my death at your order, Mr. Doctor," said Deborah, struggling till she was half out.

"Yes, you may call Mrs. Kent, she's half dead in her berth. It's murder—nothing better than murder, to coop us up like this."

"I tell you, it's not safe on deck," cried Helston.

"If it's safe for you, it's safe for us," cried Deborah, between her set teeth.

"Here, doctor, take hold of her," cried Laurent; "the madwoman will be out directly."

"If either of you dares to lay a finger upon me," screamed Deborah, "I'll make you rue it to the end of your days. Let me out—let me out."

"Deborah Burrows, you must go down," said Helston, firmly, and he laid his hand upon her shoulder.

"You said half an hour ago that the air was enough to poison us all," cried Deborah, and she struck up the doctor's arm, and struggled fiercely to get out, only Laurent still held tightly by the hatch. "I'll make you both pay dearly for this—you cowards! Call yourselves men?"

"Confound the woman! she'll be out directly," cried Laurent, as Deborah struggled harder than ever—"and if she comes, there'll be a rush. Hold her wrists, Helston."

"Shall I douse a bucket of water over her, sir?" said one of the watch, coming up, attracted by the struggle.

"No, confound her; let her have it if she will," cried Laurent.

And with a shout of triumph, as he loosed his hold upon the hatch, she forced her way out upon the deck.

"Here, come up—quick!" cried Deborah to those of whom she was the ringleader.

But the moment her foot was free, Laurent had dashed down the hatch and fastened it, just as a great wave leaped on board, and came careering along, deluging the spot where they stood, and dashing them all beneath the bulwarks, where they lay washing about with coops and ropes in four feet of water.

The men were the first to recover themselves, and stand shaking the water from their hair and eyes; then they helped Deborah Burrows to her feet, and she stood up, drenched—the water pouring from her long hair and clothes, as she staggered and would have fallen, blinded, choked, and half-stunned by the shock, but for Helston and the sailor.

"You—you wretches!" she gasped at last—"you—you did that on purpose! I'll—I'll—"

"Here, what are you about there with that helm? Ease her off a point or two," roared Laurent to the men at the wheel.

But he was too late.

Hiss!—suss!—woosh! came another wave, and deluged them once more, Helston and Deborah Burrows again losing their feet, to struggle up again half drowned, with the sailor, who had held on, stamping about the deck, roaring with laughter, and looking, in his yellow oilskins, like a mirthful dried haddock, holding his sides with glee.

"Well, Miss Burrows," said Laurent, laughing, "you see the waves don't respect women's rights."

"I'll be even with you for this," gasped Deborah.

"Thank you," said Laurent. "Will you have a chair on deck?"

"You villains—you did it on purpose!" she gasped, wringing the water from her clothes.

"There, it's time you saw your folly, Deborah Bur-

rows," said Helston, quietly. "Now, take my advice, and go below and change your things; and if you are the true woman you profess to be, show your friends below that this is a time to let others think for them."

"If I live to get ashore," cried Deborah, turning on him savagely, "I'll report your behaviour, and your goings on with that pale-faced wench, Grace Monroe; and yours too, Mr. Chief Mate, with Mary Dance. Pretty wretches to have office on board a vessel full of unprotected women! Let's see what the shipowners will say to you both then."

"Here's a regular buster comin', marm," said the sailor—"it'll be aboard directly."

Deborah rushed to the hatch, but it was fast, and the wave struck the ship and streamed along the deck, but only to wash over their ankles.

"Let the vindictive wretch go down, Wilkins," said Laurent; "or let her stay on deck—it will wash some of the poison out of her."

And he turned to Helston, who stood biting his lip with annoyance.

But Deborah Burrows did not wish to stay on deck, she was quite satisfied; and, seizing the opportunity, she crept down in a terribly quenched state—a merry burst of laughter saluting her as she reached the 'tween decks, heard plainly enough before the hatch was fastened down.

"Don't take any notice of her sharp tongue, Helston," said the mate, laying his hand upon the doctor's glistening waterproof.

"I was thinking about how unpleasant it would be for those poor girls below," said Helston, quietly.

"So was I," said Laurent to himself, as he went aft, to give a few directions to the men at the wheel; while the young doctor walked to the side, and, holding on by a belaying pin, stood with Deborah Burrows' words still buzzing in his ears, and asking himself if there was any truth in them, and whether he had paid the sweet, soft-eyed girl more attention than was consistent with his duty as the medical man who had her in his charge.

Charles Helston had worked out many problems before now, but this mastered him; and the more he questioned himself, the more he saw always before him the slight form, and pale, gentle, winning face of the girl, who seemed always to avoid him whenever he went his rounds amongst his sick.

The vessel had rounded the Cape, but fine weather did not ensue. The crew were exhausted with incessant toil, and the lull that came in the weather now and then only seemed to be the resting of the winds to gather fresh strength for their next assault upon the ship.

Helston's time was pretty well taken up with the many patients he had amongst the emigrants, the confined space and close ventilation seeming to bring on with many a state of despondency that baffled all his efforts to help them shake it away.

To make matters worse, the matron was ill, and kept her cot, leaving an opportunity for Deborah Burrows to usurp her authority almost unquestioned. But she did not have it all her own way, for Mary Dance had her following, many of the younger girls believing thoroughly in the frank, plain-spoken country maiden, whom Deborah never let slip an opportunity of directly or indirectly annoying by some harsh or bitter remark to Grace Monroe.

Six days had elapsed, and not once had they been on deck. At times they had had hot food, but for the most part it was cold, for Othello could not keep his galley fire alight; and biscuit and cold beef was the general diet, hot water not being attainable for tea or coffee.

"De great bull alligator woman—I like to see her frow the booful mealy tater now," said Othello, with a grin, as he helped distribute the provisions in the cold, comfortless way in which they were taken; and he looked very hard at Deborah Burrows as she came up for the portion for her table.

"Berry sorry, Ma'am Burrows, ma'am," he said, obsequiously; "but the water wash up agen de galley fire, and put um out, so I no cook no tater. You berry sorry, ma'am, dat no tater, ma'am?"

"Don't you laugh at me, you black Apollyon," cried Deborah, "or you'll regret it."

And she looked at him so viciously that the cook, although he grinned hugely, did not fail to give her a wide berth.

Grace Monroe was much prostrated, but she would not give in; for once or twice when she had felt ready to take to her berth she had seen the malicious look in Deborah Burrows' eyes, and fought it back.

"Never mind," said Mary Dance, "the bad weather can't last for ever, nor the voyage neither; and once we're quit of that beauty, I dare say Australia will be big enough to hold us all, so that we sha'n't see each other no more. I often wonder what's the good of such women as she."

Another day passed, and another, with the weather growing worse and worse. Then, when it seemed that their case was getting serious, the weather broke, the sea went down, observations were made, and the hatches opened so as to ventilate the ship; and plenty of exercise on deck did much to restore the healthy aspect of the passengers, who began to talk eagerly now about the coming end to their voyage, and to ask how many days longer they would be afloat.

CHAPTER V.—WRECKED.

A WEEK of uninterrupted genial weather passed now, and the ship was fast approaching her haven, when, as if finding its victim after losing it upon the vast ocean, down came the storm once more on the eve of the eighth day; and an hour afterwards the ship was driving before it under bare poles, any attempt to make sail for steering purposes ending in disaster.

The sea rose as if by magic, and the ship staggered beneath its furious assaults. Ever and again the full force of the hurricane would come upon it, and lay it upon its beam ends; but only for the stout vessel to rise once more and dash along.

Everything was made fast, hatches battened down, extra lashings given to the boats; and then, with all hands on deck, and three men at the wheel, the captain waited anxiously for the dawn; for they were driving through the black darkness at a frightful rate, and no one dared to think of the consequences of a collision, or encountering the low, rocky coast of some island.

Early in the evening, after seeing to his patients, who had diminished during the past few days to two, Helston had cased himself in waterproofs, and joined the mate upon the deck; but only to be advised to go down once more below.

"No," he said, though; "I'll stay on deck, and see the worst of it."

"Shall we have Deborah Burrows up?" said Laurent, in a lull of the storm, when the wind had ceased to shriek like ten thousand furies, and the friends were holding on together by the poop rail.

"I think not," said Helston; "that drenching was a lesson. But the woman looks indescribably vicious every time we encounter."

"Can't you make her ill?" said Laurent, laughing, as he wiped the salt spray from his face—"give her a quieting regimen."

"That sort of woman is never ill," said Helston. Then, as the vessel careened over till the mainyard dipped the waves—"We shall be in danger if this goes on, shall we not?"

"Afraid?" said Laurent, laconically.

"No," was the reply, calmly uttered, "I don't think I feel afraid. I believe I should be afraid to encounter such a storm if the choice lay with me; but like any other danger, when one is right in it, one seems to rise to the occasion; and I think I can frankly say that I don't feel at all afraid. I think it horrible, though, for those poor women, cooped up below, and unable to do more than trust to us."

There was a few minutes' pause, during which a word could not have been heard, even if it had been shouted. The darkness seemed to have grown blacker, and only by the lurid gleam of the frothing waves could the figures of the sailors be distinguished, as they clung here and there about the deck, except by the wheel, where the captain stood with those who clung to the spokes, and the binnacle light cast a dim glare upon their wet and glistening forms.

"Doctor," said Laurent, putting his lips close to Helston's ear, "if this goes on long, we shall be in imminent danger. I believe the ship to be tight now, but these waves will rip off boat and bulwark soon; and if we go over on our beam-ends again, the masts will have to go, to right us."

"But so long as the ship keeps tight we shall not hurt?" said Helston.

"I don't know," was the reply. "I don't feel as if we should get out of this storm safely, for Heaven only knows where we are being driven. Listen to me, then, doctor. I believe you would act as a friend to me in a sore strait."

"Indeed, I would," said Helston, earnestly.

"Look here, then: there is a girl below there whom I would give my life to save, if we get into such a state that we have to take to the boats."

"And that is—"

Helston paused, with his heart beating painfully. He felt that only one answer could come to such a question, and that was—

"Grace Monroe!"

As he waited, the sea, the storm, the shrieking in the rigging, and the creaking and groaning of the ship's timbers seemed to pass away, and he could only hear the words of his companion—the man whom he had made his friend, and who was now about to give him so acute a stab, that he felt as if he should hardly be able to bear it. For the truth had dawned upon him at last, that his feelings, towards the poor friendless girl were far from those which should exist between doctor and patient—in short, that he loved her; and

now he was waiting to hear what might be his doom—the words so long delayed, but which came at last—

"Mary Dance!"

Charles Helston's breath was drawn with a sort of sob, as he said, huskily, his heart beating with delight—

"What would you like me to do?"

"Why, your best to save her and her friend—that gentle girl, Grace Monroe. Get them a place in the boats at all hazards. You hear me?"

"Yes," said Helston; "and if I live, I will."

"Thanks, old fellow, I knew you would," said Laurent, gripping him by the hand. "And now we may as well take a hearty squeeze in case of accident, for we may not see the morning light."

"Not so bad as that, I hope," said Helston, grasping the other's hand.

Crash!

A great wave leaped over the bows and swept along the deck, taking with it one of the boats and half a dozen yards of the bulwarks, as if made of matchwood, when it passed away.

Crash!—another, and another; and a faint shriek was heard this time.

Laurent and Helston made their way forward, to find that three men had been swept away, and any attempt at saving them in the heaving waste to leeward seemed like madness.

The captain then went forward, to superintend the lashing of the long boat, when the ship heeled over, another wave leaped on board, and a minute later Laurent became aware of the fact that he was in command, for the captain and one of the sailors had been swept over the side.

The second mate shouted the sad news into his ears, and then they talked together for a few minutes, ending by coming to the decision that nothing could be done but let the great ship drive, as any attempt at setting canvas must result in the sails being blown out of the bolt-ropes.

Time seemed to be annihilated amidst the confusing roar of the elements; but it must have been within an hour of dawn when the hurricane increased in fury to such an extent that the *Zenobia* was laid over upon her beam-ends, and seemed slowly settling down.

There was but one thing to do, and Laurent did it, urging the men, who clung dazed and helpless to the sides, by his example, for his voice could not have been heard.

The darkness was not so intense now, and Helston could see the brave fellow as he tore an axe from where it was lashed, and divided shroud after shroud till the mainmast snapped short off, the foremast going directly after, under the well-directed blows of a couple of the other men. Then the mizen snapped, as the ship began to right, and the hamper of wreck, lying partly over the side, dragged the ship round to the wind.

"Now, then, axes to clear away!" roared Laurent, in a lull of the storm.

And he began hewing at the great ropes, when Helston gave a cry of horror, for as a huge spar passed swiftly over the side, one of its ropes seemed to wrap round the mate, as if to drag him overboard; but he was saved from that, and dashed violently against the

stump of the mizenmast, where he lay senseless and bleeding.

Helston made for him directly, and was just in time to drag him away, before a tangle of rope attached to the rigging over the side was drawn rapidly over the spot where the poor fellow had lain, and would inevitably have taken him overboard.

"Arm broken, head—"

Helston drew in his breath in a pained way, for he feared the worst.

"He much hurt, mass' doctor?" said a voice, which Helston recognized as that of the black cook.

Directly after, the second mate ran up.

"Get him below, sir—into the captain's cabin. Poor fellow! I can't leave the deck. Do your best for him. Help get him down, 'Thello."

The black needed no further orders; and with great difficulty he and the doctor contrived to get the injured man below, and had no sooner done so than they heard the cabin door dashed to, and a sound as of something beating against it heavily.

Helston went to it, but found it fast, and returned to his patient.

Laurent was perfectly insensible, and bleeding profusely from the head. To get to his little surgery was impossible, so, with Othello's help, Helston improvised bandages and splints, staunched the blood, and soon after had his patient lying in his own cabin.

Meanwhile the storm raged, and the waves came rushing over the ship, which now rolled and wallowed in the trough of the sea as would a heavy cask. The darkness had been relieved in the cabin by the swinging lamp, whose pendulum-like motions showed how the ship was being tossed about.

"Let's go back on deck, 'Thello," said Helston. "I can do no more here, and we may be of some use."

"No get back, sah," said Othello. "I try de door again, an' him all jam."

"Let's try together," said Helston.

And they rattled and pushed at the door, but it was evident that some heavy object—probably a boat—had been hurled by the sea against it, and had become wedged in the narrow opening.

They shouted, but the roar of the storm was the only answer. Once they heard voices, and Helston felt sure he made out the word "boat;" but he could not be sure, and he stood listening still by the cabin door.

"Don't you tink, sah, we better off where we am?" said Othello.

"Better off or no, Othello, it seems we are to stay here," said Helston, after another ineffectual trial to force the door.

Then they listened, to hear always the same deafening roar. The ship rose and fell, seeming as if about to plunge beneath the waves, never to rise again; but it rose after every dip, while the water rushed in floods beneath their feet to and fro, according to the motion of the vessel.

Hours must have passed in the midst of this deafening confusion of rushing waters and howling winds. The two imprisoned men had been again and again to the insensible mate, who lay helpless in his cot; and Helston's heart had ached as he waited, and thought of the sufferings of the women in their cabin.

Suddenly it dawned upon him that the wind was

not quite so violent, and he returned and shouted his opinion to the black.

"No, sah—him blow softer now; and, oh, lor! what de debble am dat?"

For at that moment there was a tremendous shock, which made the ship shiver beneath their feet, and they were thrown prostrate on the cabin floor.

"The ship has struck!" exclaimed Helston, gathering himself up, and running to the door; but it was fast as ever, and escape was impossible until the sea went down, when, if unhurt, they could climb out of the stern windows, and so reach the deck.

"She on de rocks, sah, and we shall bofe be drown," whimpered the cook.

"No, she has struck on sand, evidently," said Helston. "But are you hurt?"

"No, sah; I fall on my head, sah—I not hurt," said Othello, rubbing one arm. "I no like dis—shut up like rat in wire trap, dough."

"Listen!" exclaimed Helston.

And he held up his hand, for at that moment he thought he heard a wild shriek; but it was not repeated, and he stood trying to make out how they were situated.

The darkness was still intense, not a gleam of light coming through the cabin skylights. The ship was evidently lying upon her beam-ends upon some sand-bank, and at stated short intervals a huge wave came rushing in, struck it on the side, and burst over it, falling upon the deck with a noise like thunder, to pour off in cascades where it had not ripped away the bulwarks.

At each stroke, though, the ship seemed to lift, coming down heavily again upon the sands, and threatening to fall to pieces at each concussion. Then came a huge billow, and smote it on the side, rushing at it, and apparently plunging beneath its keel, for the hull seemed to be raised and borne on for some distance, before settling down, this time more gently; and to the surprise of the prisoners, she came down upon an even keel.

"Lifted right over a bar!" shouted Helston.

"Yes, sah, into deep water; and now we go down to de bottom!" groaned Othello. "Oh," he howled, "why aint I in de galley?"

"We are in shelter, at all events," said Helston.

For though wave after wave struck the ship, their force had evidently been exhausted first upon the shoal; and each minute the shocks grew less violent.

"She must be floating away from the sand-bank," said Helston, thoughtfully.

"Yes, sah; and she deeper and deeper in de water, and going down—eh?"

As the black spoke, there was a slight shock, as if the hull, which had been rolling gently on a heaving sea, now touched bottom; there was a harsh, grating noise, and the vessel slowly swung round, till her keel scraped again, and she fell over a little to port, to lie there, with the sea coming against her starboard side with a dull thud, the roar of the surf sounding fainter, and the fact being evident that the hurricane was nearly over.

A COMPO noted for his brevity advises, respecting diet, thus: "Don't eat Q-cumbers; they'll W-up."

My Adventures with a Highwayman.

CHAPTER IV.

THE constable whistled softly as I recognized the pieces of money, and then turned the fellow roughly over, when, to make assurance doubly sure, in doing so he dragged the pillow aside, and there beneath it lay a black crape mask, with strong strings of ribbon.

"That's the mask," I exclaimed, excitedly.

And, without more ado, the constable fetched the scoundrel off the bed with so fierce a shake that he was partly sobered; and he stood at last before us, shivering and dazed, the very image of convicted guilt. There was no bravado now—no display of threats. The poor wretch was cowed, and ready to whimper, as the constable questioned him.

"Where are your pistols, you cut-throat rascal?"

"Pistols?" stammered the man.

"Yes," I put in—"the pistols with which you threatened me to-night."

"It's a bad night's work for you, anyhow," said the constable, "as you'll find. I've been longing to put my hands on you."

"I don't know what you mean," said the man, speaking in a dejected, cowed way.

"No, I suppose not," said the constable. "You didn't go out on your master's nag in that black mask, and rob this gentleman of twenty pounds to-night, of course. And, of course, you didn't rob ten or a dozen other people the same way. 'Pon my soul, Jennings, I didn't think you'd got the heart."

"But I aint been out to-night," said the man—"it's a mistake altogether."

"What!" said the landlord, "didn't you go out to get me change?"

"Oh, yes, I remember that," said the poor wretch; "but I was very drunk to-night, and I don't recollect anything else."

"Oh, well, I dare say you'll recollect a little more about it before the magistrate in the morning. Come along, I must put you in the lock-up for the night."

"And that's the man I let rob me this evening," I thought to myself, as the poor wretch was led away, protesting and declaring his innocence. "I'm a greater coward than I thought for; but it was his pistol I did not like, not him."

It was all plain enough, and I was able to congratulate myself on the recovery of my money; but I felt, all the same, a qualm or two about the man, for the punishment would, I knew, be terribly severe; and I was musing over it, just before returning to bed, when the landlord returned from helping the constable to place his prisoner safely in the lock-up. I was very tired, and now felt sleepy, as the landlord entered my room. I made up my mind to cut him short if he began to prose, when almost his first words drove all my sense of fatigue away, and I felt that I could not sleep beneath his roof, were it ever so.

"I was going to discharge that fellow in the morning," said the landlord, "for his drunkenness. It's a horrible affair, sir; but fortunate that we've found the man. I'd have given anything sooner than it should have occurred in my house. By all that's blue, we shall have it talked about, till people will hesitate to stop

here, just as if I'd had anything to do with it; and it will nearly ruin— Anything the matter, sir?"

He had noticed the change that came over me, for my face is not a good mask to my feelings. He knew that he had said something to raise my suspicions, and he tried the more eagerly to remove whatever it might be, though all the time there was the puzzled look in the man's face of one asking himself the question, "What did I say?"

"No," I said, huskily, as I took my pistols off the table, "there is nothing the matter, only I am tired, and going to bed. Let your wife come, and show me my room."

"You won't want pistols up there, sir," he said, with a strange laugh.

"I always put them under my pillow," I said, sharply; "always, when I stop in a strange place."

His wife came in directly after, looking very pale and quiet, and she led the way to my room, where, directly she was gone, I locked myself in, and began to examine the place.

My first idea had been to flee, but I had heard the landlord bolt and bar the doors before he came to me, and, had I gone out, it would have been strange work wandering about in the dark. For one sentence of his had seemed like a revelation to me, and I had seen at a glance that he was the real highwayman, and that, on finding out that it was marked money which he had taken, and that he might be discovered thereby, he had tried to throw suspicion upon his wretched man, taking advantage of his drunkenness to place the money in his pocket and the mask beneath his pillow.

"By all that's blue!" had escaped the scoundrel's lips.

And by my manner he knew that I had detected him in some way. And now, with him aware that I held his life in my hands, and that I should denounce him, I had to pass the night beneath his roof.

"Thank heaven!" I said, "I have my pistols."

CHAPTER V.

IT was a strange feeling that which came over me, as I stood there, looking at my piece of candle, which would at the most last an hour. After that there were the long hours of the night before me for watching, since sleep would be out of the question. That man suspected me; he had betrayed himself, so had I; and he, knowing that my evidence would put a halter round his neck, would either escape for his life or—

A cold shudder ran through my veins, and feeling that I must exert myself, I took up my pistols, and carefully examined the loading and priming.

They seemed right enough, and the good, new flints were safe and firm in their places. So I laid them down, and took up the candle to thoroughly examine the place.

First of all, the door. That was a ramshackle old thing, which a thrust from a stout shoulder would have sent into the room; so I strengthened it by dragging a great oak coffer before it, and laying upon that a box. The removal of those, even if the door was broken in, would take a minute, or long enough to enable me to escape by the window, which I could tell, from the number of stairs we ascended, was not more than ten feet from the ground.

Then I looked beneath the bed, to find that three of the boards were loose, as if they could easily be moved,

trap fashion, to enable any one to come up from below: the window was all right, so were the walls; but there was a door in one corner which troubled me a good deal, for it was locked, and the key was gone. It looked to me like a closet, but for aught I could tell to the contrary, it might be a door leading into another room, through which the landlord might come at any time he pleased during the night; for I had no means of securing it, there being no other portable furniture in the room save a light dressing table and the chairs. I could not move the bed across the place, and if I could I was going to expose myself to easy attack should I lie down. The only thing, then, that I could do was to rob the other door of the box, place it there, and balance a chair upon it, so that it might fall at the slightest touch; and then I continued my investigations—on the whole, rather pleased to spend so long over them, for it diverted my attention from the strange feeling of awe which crept over me whenever I was at rest.

The ceiling next took my attention. There was nothing there but a trap, evidently used for ventilation, and too small for any one to creep through; so that gave me no trouble.

Undressing was out of the question, and once more the idea occurred to me—would it not be better to escape by the window, and make my way into the village?

I gave up the plan directly; for I felt certain that the landlord was on the watch, and that he would waylay me on the instant. In fact, I was sure he meant mischief, and I was a doomed man, unless my own ability was greater for saving myself than his was for destroying. The very pallor of his wife was enough to show that some mischief was on the way; so I gave up the window, snuffed the candle, laid a pistol by my side, and sat down, ready for anything that might befall me.

It was weird work, sitting there, in that low, white-washed room, with the bed and its faded print hangings, and the two doors, painted black, and looking to my excited fancy like great coffin lids. The candle, too, as it rapidly burned down, seemed to cast strange shadows; and at last, when it was nearly out, I felt so dissatisfied about those loose boards, that I went and re-examined them, to find, to my great joy, on taking one up, that there was no trap, no opening there.

As I returned to my place and set down the candle, I went to the window, and drew the curtain more over it; for the thought came now that some one might put up a short ladder in the yard, and watch me. As I did this, I fancied I heard a slight rustling noise; but it was gone on the instant, and all was still in the place. I had heard doors shut after I came into my room, and then all became silent, so that it seemed as if I was the only one awake in the house.

In spite of my excitement I could not avoid a yawn, and I threw myself back in my chair, raising my eyes to the ceiling; and then I noticed that the little trap-door was open.

I remained motionless, gazing at it. Was it open before? I could not say. I had fancied it closed, but there it was now, certainly open; or else that flickering candle had deceived me, and it was—yes—no—yes—it was shut—no, it was open—it was—

Flick—flicker—flick. The candle had dropped in the socket, and gone before its time; and there I was, in total darkness, with my mind made up that it was

but the shadow which deceived me, caused by the waning light; and, drawing a long breath, I whispered dear Nelly's name to myself by way of encouragement, and sat for what could only have been a few minutes, but which seemed an hour of torture. It seemed to me that I was being watched, even there, in the darkness; and that a careful aim was being taken at me. So intense grew this feeling at last, that I expected each instant to hear the report of a gun or pistol, and feel the sting of a bullet. When, at last, I heard the unmistakable crack of a board, evidently in the next room, it was quite a relief, for it took away the idea of attack coming from above, and the feeling, that was so horrible, of being watched by an unseen foe. And yet there was danger at hand—of that I felt sure; for there was another crack from a yielding board, one of those sounds which, passing unheard in broad daylight, ring out so acutely in the silence of night.

I listened, and fancied I could detect a rustling, as of some one gliding very softly along in the next room. Then, crack!—again followed by a painful silence, so prolonged that I could count every throb, throb of my heart, as it laboured on; and I pressed my hand upon my side, as if that would allay the excitement.

There was no doubt about that—there was hard breathing here, and a faint scrape, as of a hand upon the door. I strained my eyes, but in vain; the room was black—the sounds came through from the doubtful door. Yes, it was as plain as if I could see it—a key was being inserted on the other side; in another moment the door would be open, and the box thrust aside. The scoundrel meant murder—thinking, from my silence, that I was asleep.

My excitement was frightful; but I had no hesitation as to my course. I had two pistols: with one I would try to scare away danger, with the other defend my life.

Hand worked with thought; and the next instant, as I heard an unmistakable click in the lock, I raised my pistol and fired.

There was a sharp crash of woodwork, and the falling of broken plaster, dislodged by my bullet; the smoke hung chokingly about me, but, saving a rattling noise, and the crack once more of a loose board, not another sound fell upon my ears. That I had not injured the visitor I knew by the direction of my aim, and my heart leaped as I felt that my ruse had succeeded.

Sleep never came near me all through that night, and at daybreak I went down and out of the house, got my horse from the stable with little difficulty, for there was a man sleeping in the loft. He directed me to the blacksmith, and, without seeing a trace of landlord or wife, I rode to the village, had my horse shod, and after knocking up the constable, told him my adventure.

To sum up, the representative of the law got assistance, and went up to the inn, but the landlord had fled; and it was not till months after that he was captured, and, a long list of crimes being proved against him, he suffered the punishment that was his due. The poor ostler was set at liberty at once, and was for long enough quite a hero in the little place.

As for me, I returned safely to York, to find a fresh surprise. The man who had encountered me on my first starting had been found lame by the roadside, with his horse dying from my shot; and on being recognized as one who had robbed a gentleman but a

month before, he had, in his spite, denounced John Wood for setting him on to me, telling him of the large sum I should carry. The consequence was that John Wood had gone—absconded; and I fear my feelings of joy were greater than my regret.

That all happened years ago; and I, who write, sit here in this same office, almost master of all; for Mr. Manby made me a partner, when Nelly told him she would marry no other man than me; and now he amuses himself more with his grandchildren than he does with the business matters, whose guidance falls to the teller of this tale.

THE END.

My Musical History.

WITH a great idea of tune, I have not the slightest note of time. All I can say is that it was a long while ago, in a forest in Central America, that I stood with my feet firmly fixed in the earth, now listening to the roar of the hurricane, as it strove to tear me up, and made me bend and creak, as it rubbed my neighbours' branches against me, and stripped away my tender leaves; now dozing and dreaming in the hot tropic sun, and hearkening to the hum of the myriad insects that buzzed about my boughs. Birds more bright than the sky at sunrise flitted, and shrieked, and danced amidst my leaves, climbed my twigs, and nested in the topmost heights; monkeys leaped about me, and swung by their tails; huge serpents lithely glided and rested up amidst my forks. And I went on, and grew and grew, till I was an immense, massive tree.

How old was I? Have I not said that I have no idea of time? and it might have been after fifty or five hundred years that one day there was a murmuring among my roots; and then came a stroke which sent a quiver through my trunk, then another and another, stroke after stroke, which made chips fly; and this was kept up for a whole day, with the result that at night I had fallen with a crash, splintering my branches, and crushing down my neighbours, to lie prone upon the ground.

My feelings now would have been very painful, but for the knowledge that I could not be destroyed; and that even if I was reduced to powder, I should be absorbed, and live in another tree; for I was robbed of my branches, and at last lay a log of squared timber amongst the chips and fragments of my bark.

After a lapse, I was rolled and dragged to the banks of a rushing stream, thrown in, and floated down in a rapid journey to a wharf, where I lay—part of a raft of similar logs—soaking on one side, scorching on the other, till I was seized, chained, hoisted up, and one end being thrust into an open door in the bow of a great ship, I was forced in, with scores of fellows, till the hold was full, when the door was closed, and we lay there snug and comfortable in the darkness.

"What next?" I used to ask myself, as I lay there growing lighter; for, as the water which I had imbibed evaporated in the hot hold, I felt that I was beginning to part with my sap, and turning into seasoned timber.

Yes, what next? I used to say; and the answer came one day when, after rolling about for months, the ship lay on an even keel, the door in the bows was opened, the daylight streamed in, and I found myself dragged

out, to lie in the docks till, timber carriages arriving, I rode in state through the streets of great London, and found myself stacked in a large yard, surrounded by piles of timber.

I had a capital view of the place where I lay. Close by me was a tall brick building, full of windows, with a large chimney-shaft at the side; and all day long there was the pant and throb of steam, a whirring, shrieking noise, bells rang, and troops—hundreds—of men came and went, and all was new and wonderful.

Just opposite to me I could read, in big letters, the words "JOHN BRINSMEAD AND SONS' PIANOFORTE MANUFACTORY," and to my left there was a railroad, along which trains panted and rushed all day. I had heard of railroads before, for the winds brought tidings of a ship railway that was to go through the centre of the forest where I grew, near Honduras; but I never saw it, and had to journey to England before my eyes—I mean my knots—were gratified.

I used to lie there, losing my sap and seasoning, watching carts come and waggons go, and, above all, what in my innocence I took to be funerals, and shed tears—of sap—from my pores at the sight.

"What a number of poor things seem to die in that great building," I said, one day, to a lively young piece of mahogany which lay by me, and had smiled

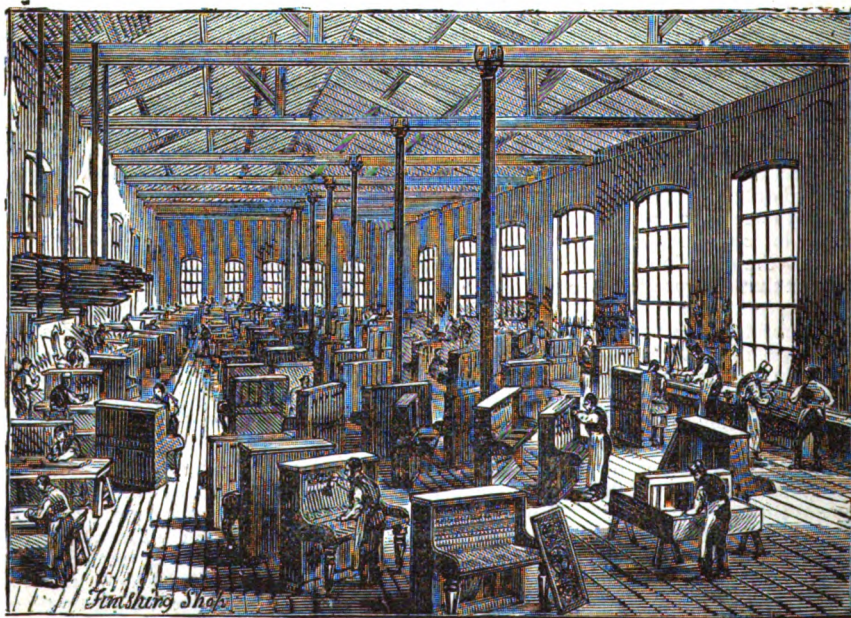
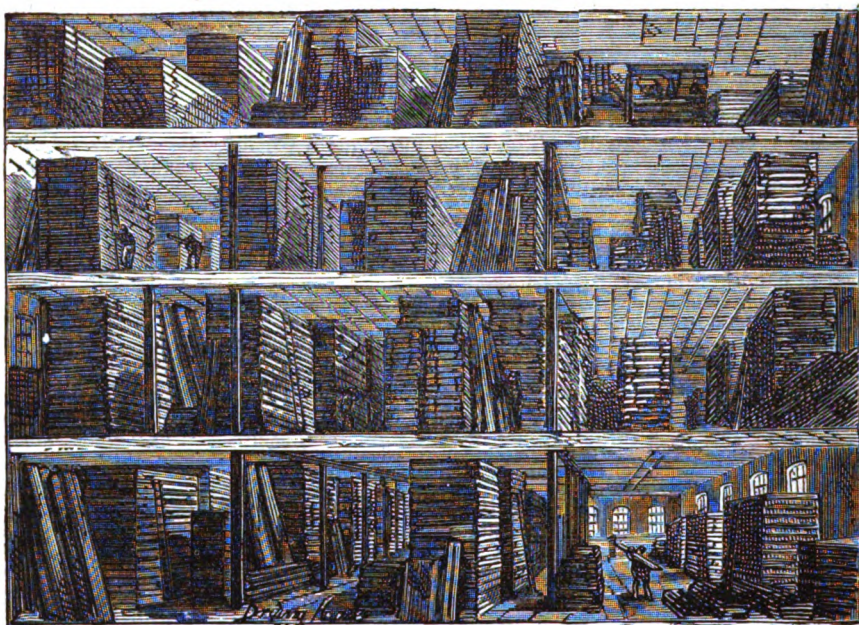
so in the sun that it cracked all down one side.

By the way, I have not told you that I was not mahogany, but black walnut; and on the day when I spoke, I had seen two squat-looking hearses come to the door and go five times.

"Poor things die?" said the mahogany. "Why, whatever do you mean?"

"Those poor creatures carried out in those handsome, shining coffins into the hearses," I said.

"Stuff!" cried the mahogany log; and it burst into such a fit of laughter that it opened another crack. "Why, you poor innocent, those are not hearses and



coffins, but carts and pianofortes. We shall be one some day."

"Piano whats?" I said.

"Piano-fortes. Ah, wait a bit, my friend, and you'll know why you are here. I've been lying here no end of time, seasoning; and when you've been here long enough you'll see."

So I did; but I lay there, in a dreamy, sleepy way, for a long time first, and grew as full of knowledge as my neighbour, the mahogany, who was missing one morning, and I thought he was gone for good; but he came back, a bit at a time, in long strips like

boards, which were laid one on the top of the other, with pieces of wood between each, so that the wind could play through; and some time after I was served the same, a couple of men passing a long saw through me twenty times, turning me, too, into boards, which were separated so that they would dry.

Ah, and I did get dry, lying there for years, in com-

pany with piles of deal and oak, and beech, and lime, and sycamore, and horse-chestnut, some cut short and

some cut long, so that they would be fitted for particular purposes; for I found in time that a number of different foreigners were joined together to make up a piano-forte.

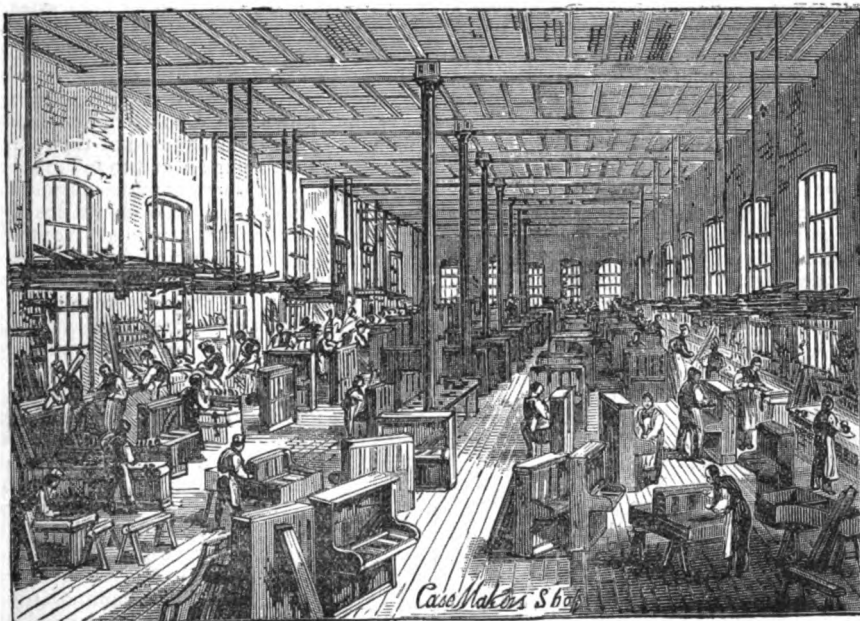
My time came at last, after I had lain there to see piles built up and piles pulled down; had seen rough logs come

in, as I did, on a timber carriage, to go out at last in the closed conveyance I named, looking so bright and handsome, polished and educated to a degree that I

was ready to undergo any amount of suffering to attain to such a pitch of perfection.

My turn, as I said, came at last; and I was carried into the great brick building, and taken into a wide room, with a smaller one beneath, full of shafts and bands, where wheels were turning, and

round steel plates spun round in a way that made me giddy. This, I learned, was the mill-room. A man seized one of my boards, held it against a circular saw



—crish—screech!—and it was cut through like magic. I shrieked as it was done, but it didn't last; and I thought that now I should be finished, and keep my carriage, and wear silk, green, red, or amber. I was rather in favour of amber or green, but I was not particular. But, judge of my disappointment when, on being cut into lengths instead of being finished at once, I was taken, with a lot of foreign friends with whom I was to be combined, into a hot chamber full of iron water pipes, and by which the great chimney rose, emitting a soft, warm glow that reminded me of the tropic forest in Honduras.

This was one of many chambers called the drying rooms—just as if we were not dry enough—and here we were piled up again, and arranged so that every tiny drop of moisture should be dried out. I don't believe there was anything approaching moisture left in me, but I had to submit; and there we all lay in piles, with spaces left between every pair of boards for the hot air to pass through.

What a variety of us there were. For instance, there were walnut ends and tops; beech, and lime, and deal for wrest pieces; deal uprights for the backs, and short pieces—mere scraps, some of them—for all kinds of purposes connected with the educated piece of wood.

Well, the time came at last when a number of us were seized, and our hearts glowed with pleasure at the idea of being finished off; for I can assure the gentle reader that the process of seasoning is anything but lively. A wood may make no count of time, but to lie in a heap, with no change, only to be turned occasionally, is a trifle dull. If one had expected nothing, it would not have been so bad; but with the knowledge that some day one was to become a finished pianoforte—perhaps of perfect check action, or maybe an oblique, or even a grand—one could not help being impatient. But it was of no use, for I noted one instance where some obtrusive pieces of wood pushed themselves forward, and wanted to be used, but the thoughtful foreman looked at the date marked on their ends, and put them back, saying it was out of the question, for they would only warp and give.

Well, off we went one day, and were carried into a great, busy work-room, where there was the noise of many workmen and tools, and a strange, hot, steamy smell of a kind of meaty jelly. I was separated from my companions, and laid down on a bench beside some curious thin pieces of wood, that were almost like brown paper in thickness.

"Hallo," I said, looking at their motley faces, "you ought to be walnut."

"Oh, yes," they said, in a foreign, quite Tartar, accent, "we are walnut."

"Not Honduras," I said, proudly, as I compared my solidity to their flimsiness.

"Oh dear, no—we are Circassian leaves."

"Indeed," I said.

"Oh, yes. We were once a great, knotty root; but we were steamed and boiled till we were soft as leather, and then we were shaved off as thin as you see."

"And what are you for?" I said.

"To ornament you," was the reply.

"Ornament me!" I exclaimed, as I thought of my beautiful dark, straight grain.

But murmurs were unavailing, and I was too well seasoned to crack or warp; so I submitted without so

much as a sigh—was taken to a bench, and from thence to a hot cupboard, where with the thin leaf, or veneer of Circassian walnut, I was left, in company with divers mouldings and bendings, to get hot amongst steam pipes. When we were of the right temperature, we were hauled out, lubricated all over with some horrible-smelling glue, of a decided Scotch accent, the veneer was laid upon me, we were pressed together, and at the same time I saw some strips of myself that had been cut into ornamental mouldings covered with veneer, which was bent right round them, pressed into the curves and angles, and the result was that I was obliged to own the combination gave strength to the fragile Circassian, while it gave beauty to me.

That Scotch glue was not nice, and I was very glad when the pressure was taken off; and I woke out of a kind of swoon, to find myself left to dry. Not long after, I found myself in a kind of store-room, waiting again; but so metamorphosed that I scarcely knew myself. I was amongst a lot of strangers; and we were all very silent, as a matter of course, till, to our intense astonishment, we found we were all old friends from the timber-yard; but oh, so changed. There were the deals cut up and made into backs, with strong supports of iron, and tubes, and braces; and I saw that the pieces of beech were joined to deal and faced with beautiful clear satiny lime, all stuck by glue to form wrest planks, as they were called; and in every direction were short pieces of wood—mahogany, sycamore, chestnut, walnut, and deal—cut, trimmed, glued up, and dry, ready, in what the foreman called "sets," for going out to the workmen to make up into cases.

I formed quite an attachment to that foreman—a pleasant, elderly gentleman, who patted, and cared for, and caressed us, and held in high esteem a piece of wood of good, sound heart and handsome grain. In one of his musing fits, as he passed among us, I heard him say to a visitor that he had been connected with the works for five and thirty years, coming when there were only three men employed, and living to see between three and four hundred at their busy tasks.

It was he who put an end to my monotonous existence of lying with backs and fronts, and falls and frets—these frets being cut out of thin strips of your humble servant, three of which were glued face to face, with the grain crossing for strength; for he came one day and gave out "sets" to various workmen—to each a back, front, sides, top, checks, wrest plank, fall, and all the rest of the pieces necessary; and at last there seemed a probability of our years of seasoning and other probation being brought to an end.

In a few minutes we were up in the din of the case-making shop, where planes, screws, augers, and glue were set to work upon us, and we began to take form. One of my friends grew fast into a solid mahogany case, fitted together with scarcely any glue, but plenty of brass rivets and screws—so that he could bear extremes of climate, heat and moisture—which, when filed off smooth and polished, gave him a spotted but decidedly aristocratic appearance. I learned, in a whisper, that he was destined for a Peninsular and Oriental steamer. Another friend I saw rise fast into a handsome rosewood instrument, with elegant fretwork front, and crimson silk; but I cannot say that I admired his legs. But let that pass. Of my other companions, some became Class I., and others Class II., up to Classes XIII. and

XIV. One was a grand, and another an oblique; but I must leave them and their history, while I, with a natural selfishness, pursue my own.

I soon found that I was to belong to a very aristocratic class of instrument; that the walnut of which I was composed was considered to be of the choicest kind, only a few picked leaves being taken out of a bundle; and, really, when I began to grow into the proper form of a case, I could not help being proud of my proportions. My outside was perfectly elegant when I was cleaned up. No spindle legs, but graceful trusses; a fretwork over my fall of the most charming pattern, and another fretwork beneath the place where my keyboard was to be—all perfect, if, I said, some clumsy amateur does not kick his toes through me when he sits down to play.

As I said, I was perfectly elegant; but when the French polisher went over me, the very foreman came and admired my grain, and acknowledged that I was a noble specimen of cabinet work, inasmuch as I had extended ends, panelled back, and my interior was to be to match.

I have been so much wrapped up in my case that I have said but little about the more important part, my interior, to which I must now turn, and tell you that while my companions became ordinary pianos, I was to be an upright iron grand. That is to say, a powerful iron framework took the place of wood, while the wood that was used was selected for its sonorous qualities.

This brings me to my sounding board, which was composed of very thin planks of Swiss pine—a delicate, satiny wood, without a single knot; these same thin planks coming over smoothly planed in packing cases; and after being glued at their edges and replaned, were cut to the exact size required, curved in a particular way, strengthened with bridges, and then placed in position. In my aristocratic case, I was fitted with an extended sounding-board right through my interior; and when this was fixed firm and dry, the foreman's fist, when applied to it, drew forth a deep-toned, sonorous boom of which any piano might be proud.

I will not weary you with accounts of the great screws, nuts, braces, and girders which were applied, with tubular columns, to make me have strength to bear the strain that was to come—a strain at which I was able to smile when, my pegs being ready, holes bored in my wrest plank, and my metal bridge in position, a clean, smart lad approached with what looked like a bundle of snakes, but which proved to be a set of strings. These, from the short, thin treble to the copper-covered and re-covered bass, he nimbly fitted on over the pegs at the bottom, and stretched right across my sounding-board and bridge to the pegs in the wrest plank, which were driven in, and the wire twined round them, to be turned by a great key as you have seen a tuner do.

I grew more terse, and stiff, and sonorous as every wire was applied and brought to its strain; for, let me tell you, I was a trichord, and right through treble and tenor I was fitted with three strings to a note. And now came the proof of my powers, and the value of my strength; for, when these strings were at their full stretch of concert pitch, my frame had to bear a strain of thirteen tons.

While this was going on, an industrious being was

busy in a smaller shop making my hammers—a most delicate piece of work—and covering them with felt, a material made in strips of the closest texture ready for the purpose.

Naturally, you will say. But stop a moment: these strips were about the length of the piano, and graduated in a manner that was perfect, from the thick felt for the bass hammer, to the thin film that should cover the A hammer in alt. Carefully contrived, too, was this felt, so that when cut in pieces the width of a hammer its ends should be of a form to be glued round the head, where it was held in pincers—of which there were hundreds—till it was dry.

Elsewhere, too, men were cutting, polishing, and perfecting my keys in the whitest of ivory white, and the best of ebony black. Fine African ivory was mine, though at times my friends have had their keys of the fossil ivory of the mammoth tusks, found where the northern rivers enter the icy seas.

I had now found my way into the finishing shop, where my final fitting was going on; and here, with my strings carefully covered with sheets of paper, to preserve them from rust and dirt, I was fitted with my keyboard, my hammers, and—the latest improvement of all—the patent check repeater action, for which my makers obtained medals and diplomas at Paris, Amsterdam, and at our own Exhibition of 1862, as well as at the great World's Fair in Philadelphia this year.

I am proud to say that, after the first ebullitions of conceit on comparing myself with what I was as a tree, I grew modest and unassuming with my approach to perfection, though at times it was impossible to help a feeling of satisfaction as I felt my first rough tuning going on; while, when the last touches were given to me in the finishing shop, and the paper from within was removed, I was tuned up, my hammers and action regulated, my handsome silked fretwork front put in, the French polisher's hand had gone over me again, and I was taken to a lift and removed downstairs, I must confess to feeling a thrill run through my wires.

This ceased, though, as I was set down in a large room, amongst several old friends, all smiling and bright in their polish and finish, and we hardly recognized one another; but as soon as this was over, we hastened to make our adieux, for separation was close at hand.

What became of the others I cannot say. As for me, I was carried directly into a small room, whose walls were stuffed with sawdust and covered with green baize, with the result that perfect silence reigned within, and I could not hear the wires of my old friends, who were in similar torture-chambers to my own.

For there is no concealing the fact, I was about to be placed on the rack, and given my final tuning.

I had not long to wait; for a highly respectable individual entered the room, and closed the door, lifted my top, took out my fretwork front, and, seating himself, ran his hands along my keys.

"Beautiful!" I said to myself, as I listened to the burst of harmonies and wild, strange chords; but the final conceit was taken out of me by the contemptuous shrug of the shoulders my torturer gave, as he ran his hands through his hair, took out a key, and for hours made me wail, and sigh, and murmur, as he screwed, and wrenched, and twisted me, string by string, till every nerve and fibre was in perfect accord.

"There, you'll do now," he said, as he shut me up;

and I relapsed, weary and dissatisfied, into a sullen silence. But the next visit paid me was for me to be carried out, touched up again by the French polisher; and then, to my great joy, I was lifted with the greatest of care, and borne out to the covered conveyance, as I had years upon years before seen other pianos carried out, when I was an ignorant stick in the yard.

"Is it really true, then, that I am a finished piano?" I said to myself, as I was laid upon my back and shut up in darkness. "Well, where to now? I hope to some happy home."

I was destined for one; but a few days had first to elapse, during which I was deposited in Wigmore-street, where one whom I must in justice look upon as my parent, even as it was due to him—a calm, grave, elderly man—that I was brought with my companions from far-off lands to become what I am, came, as is his custom, and examined me, ending by sitting down and giving the final touches to my voice, ending with a sigh of satisfaction as he closed me up, leaving me with a label on my breast bearing the word "Sold."

Another lifting, another quiet, dark journey; and then I was borne off, one of two thousand pianos made in that year by the firm from which I sprang. I don't know where all the other pianos go, but I found myself next, resting on a velvet-pile carpet, in a charming drawing-room, amidst elegant walnut furniture to match my exterior, and water-colour sketches, china, *bric-a-brac*, and the hundred delicate objects which denote the presence of a woman of taste.

My bearers had hardly departed when my new owner arrived, and sat down before me. I will not attempt to describe her beyond her hands, which were white as the keys over which they ran, but soft, and plump, and warm.

"Beautiful!" she exclaimed.

And for a moment I thought she alluded to the perfection of her hands, on which glistened a couple of rings. But no, she meant the tones I poured out in obedience to her touch; and then, lifting up her voice, she burst forth into a sweet song, which thrilled my very frame as our notes blended together in one beautiful whole. I would not say it, but it is the truth.

"Ah, Mr. —," said my mistress one day, after many joyous musical hours which we had spent together, "I am so glad you have come: I want you to try my piano."

The great master bowed, sat down before me, and for ten minutes that room was filled with wondrous melodies and chords, such as I could hardly have believed it possible to emanate from polished walnut.

"Madame," said the great professor, rising, "I congratulate you upon your purchase—your instrument is perfect."

Wise Words.

THE polished knight ne'er leaves a dame,
But etiquette can twist:

He knows his actions how to frame,
And get himself dismissed.

NAUGHT shows great pleasure more than tears—

Joy lives next door to pain:
The tear's the parent of a smile—
The rainbow and the rain.

The Talethes.

ONE of the great drawbacks to a waterproof coat is that it is impervious to moisture; and though this may sound like an Irish bull, it is none the less true. Of course it is highly advantageous that it should repel the rain, but a serious defect that it should also repel the vapour constantly arising from the human body. A physiologist will tell you how many pints of water pass, in the shape of perspiration, from the pores of a man in the course of twenty-four hours; but it needs no man of science to show how thoroughly damp and unsafe are garments over which a waterproof has been for some hours worn. Seeing how necessary impervious garments are in our rainy isle, garments that throw off the rain without acting as a blister or poultice to him who wears them, an enterprising firm—Messrs. Cooper, Box, and Co.—have invented a new india-rubber overcoat, which they call the Talethes, and its special feature is this: that the sportsman or driver may be pelted with the stiffest Westmoreland shower all day, and emerge from it at last dry inside and out. The peculiarity of the article of attire is that it ensures perfect ventilation; and to provide for this, a series of tiny india-rubber tubes run along the back and under the arms, effectually carrying off the invisible vapour which arises from the body, all of which is deposited on the lining of waterproof coats of the ordinary construction. A wet day in a punt on the Thames is a very good test of the properties of the Talethes, and after eight hours' incessant rain one feels prepared to encounter anything that Jupiter Pluvius can do, even on the hottest of autumn's muggy days. The Talethes should form part of the outfit of every sportsman, and be on the box of every one who drives.

Postal Points.

THE following points have been taken from the report of Lord John Manners for the past year:—

"The Post Office, while fulfilling its first duty to the public by affording means for the rapid transmission of correspondence, is also made the vehicle of conveyance for small articles of almost endless variety. Of these, the following articles were observed passing through the post during the year—viz., silkworms and gentles; flowers, fruit, and vegetables; various kinds of game; wearing apparel; models of metal-fittings and toys; leeches, snails, eggs; six white mice, a sparrow, two snakes, a crayfish, and a dog."

Several of these, being prohibited articles, were sent to the Returned Letter Office. The dog was posted at the Lombard-street office, and, having fallen into the bag affixed to the letter-box, was not discovered until the contents were turned out at St. Martin's-le-Grand.

The failure of letters to reach the persons for whom they are intended is not always attributable to the Post Office. An unregistered letter was recently received at Liverpool in a very thin cover, bearing an almost illegible address, and was delivered to a firm to whom it was supposed to be directed. On being opened, the letter and its enclosures, five £100 notes, were found to be intended for another firm, to whom they were eventually delivered.

The following is a copy of the address of a letter which also reached Liverpool, the names of persons and places being here omitted :—

"This letter is for Mrs. M. —. She lives in some part of Liverpool. From her father John —, a tailor from —; he would be thankful to some postmaster in Liverpool if he would find her out."

The addresses unfortunately could not be found, and the letter was sent to the Returned Letter Office. It happens not unfrequently that complaints are made of the failure both of letters and telegrams, which, after inquiry has taken place, are found in the waste-paper baskets or pockets of the addressees.

Superstition rarely stands in the way of the extension of postal accommodation or convenience, but a case of the kind recently occurred in the west of Ireland. Application was made for the erection of a wall letter-box, and authority had been granted for setting it up; but when arrangements came to be made for providing for the collection of letters, no one could be found to undertake the duty, in consequence of a general belief among the poorer people in the neighbourhood that at that particular spot a "ghost went out nightly on parade."

The ghost was stated to be a large white turkey without a head.

The Lightest Jockey on Record.

IN answer to a query, "What was the weight of the lightest jockey who ever rode a race?" the editor of the *Field* says:—

"The lightest jockey we ever heard of was Kitchener, and, as the lowest weight at which he rode is a frequent subject of discussion, we will give the particulars somewhat fully. It is thought by many persons that Kitchener's lowest weight was when he won the Chester Cup on Red Deer in 1844. Such, however, is not the fact. On that occasion, his bodily weight was 2st. 12lb., and the saddle, bridle, &c., weighing 1st. 2lb., made up the weight to 4st., at which the horse was handicapped. But Kitchener had ridden at Ascot, under the nickname of 'Tiny,' four years previously, and his bodily weight was then only 2st. 11lb., so that 1st. 11lb. dead weight was required to bring him up to the 3st. 12lb. at which he rode. The race was the Wokingham Stakes, run on Friday, June 9, 1840, and the horse was Colonel Wyndham's chestnut filly by Nonsense, out of Shrimp. As this occurred more than a dozen years before the *Field* came into existence, we cannot quote any report of the race from our own pages; but we find the following remarks in the *Sporting Magazine* of July, 1840:—"Captain Becher afforded some amusement by entering from his establishment little Tiny, who rejoiced in going to scale 2st. 7lb., with a 6lb. saddle. He is a good-humoured lad, and bore the yokels' grin very stoically. It was like perching on high one of the large dolls seen in the toyshops in Holborn, save that here there was life. He, however, rode well, and bids fair to walk up the sleeve of some of the big uns." And *Bell's Life* of June 21, 1840, contained the following on the same subject:—"The most amusing feature in this race (Wokingham Stakes) was the first appearance of a mite from Captain Becher's stable, who rejoices in

the cognomen of Tiny, and justifies it by being able to go to scale 2st. 7lb., with a 6lb. saddle. He rode the Nonsense filly; and although the unprecedentedly low weight of 3st. 12lb. instead of a feather was put on her, she actually carried nearly two stone of dead weight! This beats Little Bell and Johnny Howlett into fits."

The Egotist's Note-book.

THIS is the way to get to the North Pole. One man has been proposing a railway over the ice. No such bad plan after all; but nothing to the proposal of another enthusiast, who would balloon the distance. He says:—"A party of volunteers might be found who would set off in a balloon from the ship's quarters, and, with a favourable wind, try to cross the Pole. They might be carried right over to inhabited regions on the other side; the distance, not over 1,000 miles, seems quite within the compass of balloon undertakings. Or, again, set off in a balloon from the ship with a favouring wind, and without rising far above the ice, establish a series of small provision depôts, say at twenty miles intervals, marking the spots carefully by means of astronomical observations and flags, or lights. The balloon would be furnished with apparatus for laying hold of the ice where it might be desired to disembark for this purpose. Supposing, after the Pole was reached, that the balloon was incapacitated for return to the ship, the party, lightly equipped, without sledges, might make their way back on foot by the help of these depôts. Walking twenty miles a day, they could thus accomplish the journey back in say twenty days." This sounds absurd at the first blush; but it really is not so impossible, after all, especially if some simple, effective means could be found of generating a lighter gas, and these means carried in the balloon, which would never rise above twenty feet above the ice, being kept down by drag ropes trailing over the surface.

So, in spite of the talk of Shakspeare, "Henry V." has come to a sudden conclusion at the Queen's Theatre for want of support. It is too bad, for the piece was admirably placed upon the stage; in fact, a more magnificent piece of mounting has been rarely, if ever, seen. In addition, it was well played, Mr. Phelps being the leader. Shakspeare, after all, seems to be a blight on theatrical managers. I have serious thoughts of trying to obtain the Dauphin's suit of armour—a very magnificent one, by the way. This would stand capitably in my hall—four feet wide, and our maid-of-all-work calls it a passage—and could be introduced to visitors as having been worn by an ancestor. Nobody would think it was tin; and even tin proves beneath the surface to be iron—the real thing.

Ladies should be careful how they whisper secrets in the corridor behind the boxes at the Gaiety Theatre, for it is a perfect whispering gallery, and what is spoken in one part is heard distinctly in another. The other morning, in the interval of a performance, I was strolling up and down, and a gentleman was in conversation with a charmingly dressed young lady. But there, what was her dress compared to her face, her

hair, her lustrous eyes, and the long, dark lashes that shaded them? I beg to say that I did not listen. This is proved by my not hearing evil of myself; but I heard her say, in dulcet tones—evidently, after some earnest prayer on the part of the gentleman—she said—she said—

Reader, do you think I would be such a mean-spirited, pusillanimous creature as to tell?

Senior Greeks at the Edinburgh University appear to be regular Turks, to judge from their behaviour to Professor Blackie on the opening of his lecture. They seem to have taken lessons from the street Arabs; and squeaking, whistling, desk-thumping, stick-rapping, hisses, laughter, and the wondrous concatenation of sounds that weak-minded boys will on occasions emit, were there. When young men have reached to the study of Greek, no doubt they are able to spell. I wonder, then, if the question were put to them, how many could contrive to write down the word "Ass?"

An extraordinary will case has been heard in Ireland, in which the question of the sanity of a lady arose. Some of the very small articles of clothing prepared by the testatrix for the baby that should rise at the first resurrection were produced in court. They included trousers about five inches long and three inches wide, with jackets, swallow-tailed coats, chemises, and a great variety of other articles, of corresponding dimensions. The evidence, however, as to the testatrix's capacity on general business matters was, his lordship said, overwhelming; and, after consultation, an agreement was come to. So that if a lady believes in the necessity for being prepared to clothe babies in swallow-tail coats at the last day, and makes those garments, and also trousers of diminutive size, she is not to be considered mad. Well, I have no objection, and I dare say the lady is pleased; but I should like to see a small-sized baby dressed in this mode. What a fat little man he would make!

How flowery foreigners are. Here is an advertisement calling attention to Naples:—

THE choicest winter climate—bright and sunny; mean temperature, 63 deg., unsubject to rapid changes. The majestic ruins of Pompeii—the ever-consuming Vesuvius—the Bay, in grandeur and beauty unparalleled—the Greco-Roman Temples of Gods and Goddesses sung of by Homer, Horace, and Virgil—all these command enthusiastic admiration. Moreover, the San Carlo Opera will open, and the Carnival outvie itself. The hotel accommodation is unsurpassed, and convenient to all purses.

That last passage is rich in the extreme—"convenient to all purses." Pray, who will go?

"Truth" is the title of a new periodical, which will be produced at the beginning of the new year, with Mr. Labouchere as the editor, and Mr. Horace Voules as the shipwright who performs the launching. Shams and swindles are to be shaken out of their shoes, and the new argosy is to bear the lady, who generally lives at the bottom of a well, out into the sunshine, where, mirror in hand, she will flash daylight amongst the dark doings of commerce, apply the spur to sluggish abuses, and make blind plodders through daily life see

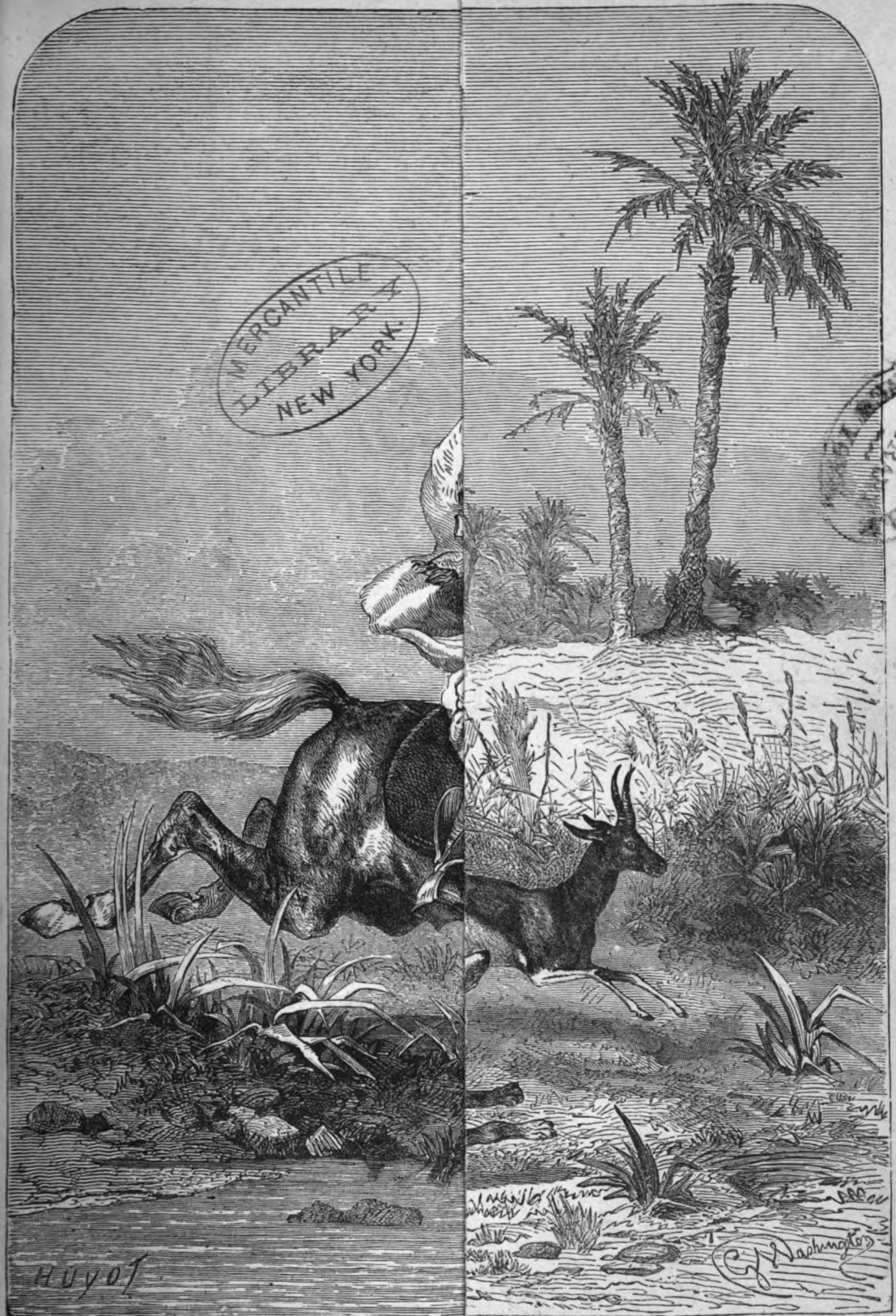
what a hydra there is still lurking amongst us, waiting to shrivel and fade when brought into open day. A paper that will always boldly tell the truth, regardless of party feeling or favour, deserves to succeed.

One does not expect to see mechanical bedsteads published like three-volume novels; but, all the same, Mr. William Tinsley, of Tinsley Brothers, the well-known publishing firm, has patented an invalid bedstead, which, by a simple mechanical contrivance, enables the attendant or doctor to raise the reclining person to any angle, up to the sitting position, by the simple turning of a winch. It will be a luxury to invalids, and for hospital purposes invaluable. At the same time, it almost looks as if Mr. Tinsley, when inventing, was thinking of placing people in a position to read his books.

A young artist of my acquaintance is going in for painting the spirit hands and faces that appear at the various *stances*, and when asked as to colours, declared that the paintings would be colourless—as they would be executed with Roberson's medium!

A FEW weeks ago, a sale of horses took place in Paris, and one lot was as poor, broken-kneed a hack as was ever seen anywhere. The horse was brought forward, and the auctioneer, like most of his class, began lauding what he had to dispose of. "Gentlemen," said he, "I have now the pleasure to bring before your notice a really thorough-bred animal—an undoubted *pur sang*. Will any one make a bid of three thousand francs for it?" One of the onlookers made a firm bid of forty-five francs. "Really, gentlemen, this is too bad. An offer of forty-five francs for such an animal is simply ridiculous. Only the day before yesterday it did its four kilometres in six minutes, and forty-five francs is all that is offered! Have you all done at forty-five francs? Going for forty-five francs—going for the mean sum of forty-five francs—for the last time—gone!" The purchaser took the sorry brute away, and was not long in ascertaining that in place of doing its four kilometres in six minutes, it could not do one kilometre in an hour. He went back furiously to the auctioneer, and asked him if he did not say the horse had done four kilometres in six minutes. "Most decidedly," said the auctioneer. "And where might this event have come off?" asked the irate purchaser, endeavouring to smother his anger. "In a railway truck," was the unabashed reply.

Now that winter has come, and ladies are looking forward to many a pleasant evening spent in the enjoyment of the dance, they often forget the attendant fatigue, until the exhaustion of the following day reminds them that every pleasure has its alloy. This fatigue is in great measure produced by the tight ligature or garter with which the stockings are fastened, hindering the free circulation of the blood. Medical men are unanimous in declaring the use of garters to be a most fruitful source of disease. Every lady desiring health and comfort should at once provide herself with a pair of the new patent stocking suspenders, made by Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London. The price is only 3s. per pair, of any draper, or post free for two extra stamps.



Among the Icebergs.

CHAPTER I.



E whispered to me, "To-morrow my own!"

To-morrow his own—his very own—his wife!

His words seemed to be repeating themselves in my ears in a dull, buzzing murmur, till I felt as if I could bear it no longer. Then, too, there was a burning sensation upon my cheek, where he had kissed me as he said "Good night!" and then—"To-morrow my own!"

I could not stop with them, and ran up into my room, to look at the burning spot upon my cheek; but though it seemed to burn, it was ghostly white, like the rest of my poor, weary-looking little face; and then, as I realized it all, I threw myself on my knees, by my bed, to pray.

To pray to God to help me?

No, no, no; but to Mark—to poor Mark—to pray to him that if he were yet in life he would give me some sign; if he were dead, that, poor boy, he would take me to him, that I too might die and be at peace, for all this seemed more than I could bear.

I got up, and walked about the room, hardly seeing where I went, for I felt frantic. Praying seemed to have done me no good, and I knew only too well why it was so. At times I hardly believed it was all true. It seemed impossible that two years could have passed away—two years and three months; and once or twice I tried hard to believe that this was all a dream, and that I was not to be married the next day.

I said that I felt frantic. I believe I was so; for I found myself looking in the glass again, and dragging at my cheek where he had kissed it; and then I struck it as hard as I could, again and again, till it looked red for a few moments, but only for the blood to run back again directly to my poor throbbing heart, as, like a passionate child, I threw myself upon the floor in the darkest part of the room, and cried as if my heart would break.

I don't know, I am not learned in such things, but I believe those tears relieved me, so that I was able to think more calmly; and at last I drew myself up a little, so that I could rest my chin upon my hands, and stare right back through the darkness into the past.

As I sat up, one of my bare arms came in contact

with something cold, and I knew it was the pearl necklace he had fastened round my neck last thing, saying it was a becoming present for a bride; and now as I touched it the feeling of frantic rage and horror came back, and I tore it off, so that the pearls fell pattering upon the floor, and one struck the window with a sharp tap that made me start.

Then there came a knock at the door, and my mother's voice said, softly—

"Jessie—Jessie."

I did not answer at first, but she knocked again, and I heard whispering, and I knew that my father was there too, and I replied.

"Will you not let me in, Jessie?" said my mother's voice again; but I refused.

Then came their words, almost together—

"Good night, God bless you, my child!"

And I could not reply to them; for I was choking with sobs, as I thought of how little they knew how they themselves were cursing me in letting me be taken from them as his wife, although they called upon God to bless.

I heard them sigh as they went away, and then there was another gentle tap at the door, and I heard Ann Brent's voice whispering through the keyhole.

"Miss Jessie, Miss Jessie, you'll let me in, won't you?"

I did not answer—I could not; and the next minute, by her sobs and her hard breathing, I knew that she was sitting on the mat, with her cheek leaning against the panel, and I felt sure that she would sit there like that all night if I did not let her in.

And I could not, for I felt that I must be alone, and go over the past; and for a long while I tried hard, battling with my mind to force it back to the past, when it was filled with the present and the future. It seemed as if it would think of nothing but to-morrow, and kept painting the pictures of the wedding—of Stephen Ellerby, and his proud dark face, as he took my hand as my master, when I should be his slave for life; till I turned cold and icy, and felt more and more as if I hated him horribly, and that I ought to run down to one of the dock bridges, and jump off into the cold, black water, so as to be free from him for ever.

These thoughts would come, no matter how I battled, till I put my hands to my temples, threw back my hair, and held my head pressed tight and hard; and then, looking straight back, I made it all come so that I could go over it once more, and then hide it deep in my heart, never to be thought of again, for in a few hours I was to be his wife.

CHAPTER II.

I WENT back first of all to the morning when poor Mark was to sail, when I was sitting thinking whether I should go down to the docks or not. Papa and mamma had wanted me to go, and I had declined, though all the time I knew that I wanted to; and now I was thinking whether it would be thought strange. And at last, calling myself cruel, and cowardly, and unworthy, I had risen to go, when I sank back into my chair, for Ann Brent came to the door in a hurried way, with the tears wet on her cheeks yet, although they were red and flushed, and—

"Oh, miss," she said, "here's Mr. Grant."

The next moment there was a quick, hasty step, and I heard the door close, and I knew that I was alone with him; and though I could not even see him for the mist that swam before my eyes, I knew that, though he had wished me good-bye the day before, he had come back, and that John Berry had come with him, and was now downstairs with Ann.

"Miss Wynne—Jessie," I heard him say.

And I rose and tried to be cold and formal, and to prevent him from seeing that I was agitated by his coming.

"Miss Wynne!" he exclaimed again, in husky tones.

And I saw him now, standing before me in his loose, open sailor's dress, his hands stretched out towards me, his head thrown back, and his every feature telling me—oh, so plainly!—that to which his lips were giving utterance; while with my heart throbbing painfully, I stood, I know, proud and stern, and cold as a statue.

"Miss Wynne—no, no," he cried—"Jessie, dearest Jessie, forgive me—pray forgive me! I ought to be on board now, but I could not go without one more word. I have hurried away, although the *Dawn* is already out in mid-stream, and they are waiting. Yesterday I dared not say this—to-day there has been a change. Pray listen. Mr. Green has given up at the last moment. His health breaks down, and your father—God bless him!—will not keep the vessel back, and maybe spoil the voyage. At the last moment, then, he has placed all confidence in me, and I am captain of the *Northern Dawn*."

He stopped for a moment, as if thinking I should speak; but though I felt my heart leap for joy, I would not say a word; and he came two steps nearer.

"Jessie," he said, and his voice thrilled me as he spoke—"yesterday, as a poor mate, I could not have said this—I know it would have been presumptuous, almost an insult; but now I felt that I might venture. I ask nothing now. I know that I am bound upon a perilous voyage, that it will be months before I return; but I could not leave you without telling what I have long hoped that you might divine—that I love you—Heaven knows how dearly; that I would die for your sake; and that one gentle, hopeful word will send me up there into the icy seas the happiest man on the face of God's earth. I know all my shortcomings—how unworthy I am of you, how presumptuous I have been; but give me that one little hopeful word, send me away knowing that the future may be to me a time of happiness, and this voyage that I have seemed to dread—only because it takes me away from Hull—shall seem a time of pleasure. But you look angry—you frown."

"Mr. Grant," I said, for I had now found words, "is this manly—is it fair—to take this advantage of my parents' absence? You know they are on board the *Dawn*, and you come here—you, their servant—to insult their child with your proposals. You forget yourself, sir; and were they here—"

I stopped short, for I could say no more. How I said what I did, I cannot tell. I knew every word was stinging him to the heart, as it was tearing me to say it, and yet the words would come. It was as though I was possessed, for though I would gladly

have gone down on my knees to him, or have thrown myself into his arms, I felt bound to give him all the pain I could; and he could not read that all I said was false—that they were words of the lips, and not of the heart; but he stood there silent and appealing for a few moments, with his hands still stretched out, and then a groan burst from his breast.

"Miss Wynne," he said then, sadly, "I beg your pardon"—and oh, how I could have cried as his poor aching heart heaved at my cruelty; but I mastered my tears then, and tried to torture him, that at some future time, as I thought, I might make him the happier. "I beg your pardon," he said again. "You do me wrong to call it an insult. It was an honest love I offered you, though only the love of a simple-hearted sailor. I find that I have been mad these last few years, or else dreaming; and that the ladder I have been trying to climb does not lift me into the paradise I looked for. Once more I say, forgive me. You may, when I am gone, cease to look upon it as an insult. God bless you—good-bye."

There was that in his look then—in the appealing tones in which those words were uttered—that drove away my cruel thoughts and words, like leaves before the hot and tempestuous blast. I loved him—I loved him—I knew I did, and his heart was mine—all mine! My own brave, handsome darling!—whose gallant acts at sea I had treasured ever since I was quite a girl. I could not let him go like that; and I was trampling down the false, cruel coquetry of my nature, as the blood flushed to my cheeks—to my temples; my hands were rising to be held out to him, and in another moment I should have exclaimed—"Forgive me!" when there was another hasty step on the stair, the door was flung open, and Stephen Ellerby hurried in, to exclaim—"Ah, Miss Jessie, not gone to— Oh, I beg pardon," he added, with cutting politeness, "I was not aware that you were engaged."

The next moment we heard his feet upon the stairs, and, as I stood cold and angry once more, I saw poor Mark cover his eyes with his hand for an instant.

"Dreams, dreams, dreams!" he said slowly, and his voice was very husky. "Miss Wynne, I can't accuse you. I have been wrong in my interpretation of what was only your kindness. I took it for something warmer. I was ambitious, I could not help it. If I am half heart-broken, it is not your fault. Once more, forgive me; and do not think I am trying to blacken another to set myself better in your eyes. I see now that to which I was blind before; but for Heaven's sake pause, for I would sooner see you in your grave than that man's wife."

What I said, how I looked, I cannot now tell; for I was surprised and startled, as well as angry. I felt resentment, I know, that he should dare to look upon this meeting with Stephen Ellerby as meaning more than a passing call; and I should, had I spoken, have said some hasty words; but there was once more a mist before my eyes, through which I could dimly see him standing for a moment at the door, and then he was gone.

Gone! I heard his step on the stairs as I rushed

forward, to fall on my knees with outstretched hands, and, with a hysterical sob, called to him to return; but the heavy echoing bang of the closing hall door was the only reply.

I rushed to the window, and threw it up, to lean out; but I was only in time to see him pass round the corner, closely followed by John Berry; and I staggered back into the room, just as Ann rushed in, sobbing hysterically, tearing at her hair, and acting like a madwoman.

"Oh, oh, oh!" she half shrieked. "Miss Jessie, Miss Jessie! Kill me! Take your scissors and cut out my wicked, lying, cruel tongue; for I've told him I hated him, and let him go off to those cold, icy seas, never perhaps to come back any more, and thinking that I did not care for him—not a bit."

"Oh, hush, hush, Ann!" I found words to say; "we shall be heard."

For every exclamation was like a fresh sting to my poor heart.

"I can't help it; I don't care if all Hull knows what a wretch there is in it," cried Ann. "I was cruel, cruel to him, and I slapped his face when he kissed me; and oh, oh, oh! what a wicked, wicked girl I am!"

She threw herself on the carpet, and lay groveling there, dragging at her hair, which she had torn down; while I, with education and tender nurture, with the knowledge of better things, had acted even as this poor ignorant girl; as falsely—aye, and with as much cruelty—to him who had trusted and loved.

"Oh, Miss Jessie, Miss Jessie!" she cried again, "he's gone, he's gone; and you've sent yours away happy and joyful, and I've nearly broken poor John's heart; for—oh, oh, oh! what shall I do? what shall I do?—I told him I loved that wretch Simmons from the office, and I only hate him, for he's a beast."

Gone! Yes, they were gone; for as I stood at the window, almost blind with tears, there, out in the Humber, slowly following the steam-tug, was the whaler, commanded now by brave Mark Grant; and had I not been blind, I might have had the solace of following him with a glass, as a skiff took him off to the ship's side.

But all I could do was to stand waving a white handkerchief; and once I kissed my hand to the vessel as she glided away, taking with her, though Mark knew it not, the love of my poor heart of hearts.

CHAPTER III.

I DID not move my hands from my temples, where I kept them pressed for fear that my thoughts should run away again beyond my control. Now I seemed to be able to hold them, but if they mastered me again I felt that my retrospect would be at an end. I raised my head, though, a little, to listen for a moment, and I could hear that Ann was still outside the door; for I could hear her breathe hard, and once there came a sigh.

I went back then to the time when the *Dawn* had been gone a year, and my father had more than once expressed his uneasiness respecting her. Ellerby and Moore had had two whalers go out quite a fortnight later than our vessel, and they had both made good voyages, and come back laden with oil; while

ours had not been even spoken of by the ships from either of the Scottish ports.

My father little knew the pangs he used to give me when he was talking about the ship, and blaming himself for trusting her to the charge of so young a man.

"But there was something about Mark Grant I liked," he said one evening; "he was a brave and skilful sailor, and if the *Dawn* is lost, we'll say that he did his best. But it's ruin if she don't turn up—ruin for us all."

I saw mamma looking at me in a strange way, and then she seemed to be coming towards me; and the next thing I recollect is awaking from a dreamy state as I lay upon a sofa, and they were sprinkling my face, and applying salts to my nostrils.

"It was the heat overcame her," I heard my father say; but from mamma's face I could read that she did not think it was the heat, and I knew from that moment that she had read my secret.

I could have borne greater heat than that; but it was now for the first time that I realized the possibility of the vessel being lost. Being detained for months might only mean being frozen up in the pack ice, far away in the north, and forced to wait through the long dreary night of an Arctic winter for the coming of spring, with soft southern gales, to thaw them out; and I knew that there were stout hearts on board the *Dawn*, who would bear that privation in their well-provisioned vessel without a murmur.

I felt sure that there must be something more than I had heard, and I dared not ask at home, lest it should trouble my father; so I waited till the next day, at an hour when Stephen Ellerby would be at our house—where in fact he had been much of late, for both my father and mamma gave him a very hearty welcome—one that made my heart ache as I read it only too plainly, and tried to strengthen myself in my future resolves.

My intention was to go down to Ellerby and Moore's offices, in the High-street, and ask old Mr. Moore, who had known me from a child, and would, I felt sure, tell me anything, what his opinion was respecting the *Dawn*; and taking Ann, who was delighted as soon as she knew the object of my mission, I set off.

"But there, Miss Jessie," she exclaimed, on the way, "you needn't fidget; they're sure to be all right and safe. Mr. Grant—Captain Grant, I beg his pardon—is a wonderful sailor; and hasn't he got John Berry, as Ellerby's people would give their ears to have in one of their whalers? They won't come to no harm, bless you. I was asking Simmons about what was thought, and they all say it's nothing to mind."

Ann's words were well-meaning, but they bore no comfort to me. I could only think of the consequences to our family if the ship was lost; and there was a strange sensation, as of something clutching my heart, as I thought of the consequences to me.

I had hard work to keep back my tears, as I hurried along to the narrow, tortuous old street by the little river, till we reached Ellerby and Moore's counting-house, where a red-haired, freckled-faced man met us at the door, grinning familiarly at Ann, who tossed her head and told him to let Mr. Moore know Miss Wynne wished to speak to him.

"That's Simmons, miss—the wretch I told John Berry I loved. Just as if it was likely!"

The next minute we were shown in to Mr. Moore's private room, several clerks looking up from their desks as we passed through the outer office to where the quiet, pleasant, grey old gentleman was standing ready to place chairs for us both, when he stood like some old cavalier in a lady's presence, waiting to hear the object of my visit.

I told him in as few words as possible; and he then glanced at Ann.

"A confidential servant of your family?" he said, biting the while at one of his grey whiskers.

"Oh, yes, Mr. Moore," I said; "poor Ann has a very dear friend in the *Dawn*, and would, like me, be very glad to hear your opinion."

"My dear young lady," he said, "you come most kindly to me to ask my opinion upon this matter, and it would be cruel for me to try and conceal from you that a whaler among the ice is always running the gauntlet of terrible dangers. You know that, though, as well as I. There is the pack, the floe, the berg, and the shutting-in—all dangers that seamanship cannot always avert. But Captain Grant is a stout sailor, and I should have had no hesitation in placing him in command in one of our vessels; but there—there—there, my dear child, you are agitated. I did not think it was like that. I thought the hot wind blew from another quarter. There, there, don't cry; let me ring for a glass of wine. Don't hurry, though—don't hurry. I'll wait till you've wiped your eyes."

"Oh, thank you, thank you, Mr. Moore," I said, trying hard to force back the sobs and tears.

For I don't know how it was, but when he spoke so highly of poor Mark, I felt that I must, and I did, go close to him and kiss his hand, and then burst into tears.

For Mr. Moore had been a dear old friend from the time when he came to play a rubber of whist at home, and I—a tiny little thing—used to climb on his knee before going to bed, and feel in one pocket of his waistcoat for the sweets he always brought. There was, then, something comforting in his fatherly words and ways, as he passed his arm round me, and patted my cheek gently, and led me back to my chair.

"Look here, my little one," he said; "it does not do to give up hope. Hope, you know, is the sailor's sheet anchor, and Mark Grant may at any time come sailing up the Humber; and, honestly, I don't think there's much cause for alarm yet."

"You don't, Mr. Moore?"

"No, my little one, I don't, indeed. It is long, but still not too long yet. And now I know what interest you take in it, I shall try my best to get the first news to bring you."

"Oh, thank you, thank you!" I said.

"But, I say, my little one," he said, patting one of my burning cheeks, "this is all new to me. I thought friend Stephen—"

"Oh! please, please, Mr. Moore," I said.

And he understood me; for he nodded two or three times, and smiled, and then touched his lips with his finger.

He rang then, and the wine was brought; but the

glass he filled remained untouched, and after a few more comforting words, I went back homewards, feeling somewhat more hopeful and trusting, to wait patiently for the news that was so long in coming.

The Other Side of the Question.

THE following account, written by Serjeant Cox in the *Spiritualist Magazine* anent the Slade question, is, to say the least, very remarkable, and deserves to be given, inasmuch as it is only fair to look on both sides of the question:—

"Having undertaken to examine without prejudice or prepossession, and to report faithfully, without favour, in a purely judicial spirit, any alleged psychological phenomena that might be submitted to me as president of the Psychological Society of Great Britain, I narrate without comment what I witnessed at a sitting with Dr. Slade this afternoon.

"I sat alone with him, at three o'clock, in a room at 8, Upper Bedford-place, Russell-square, into which the sun shone brightly, at a table about five feet by four, having four legs, no ledge below, and no cloth upon it.

"Dr. Slade sat at one side of the table, sideways, so that his legs and feet were not under the table, but his whole body fully in my view as he faced me. I sat at the side, the corner of the table being between us. As I sat, I could see halfway below the table, and by moving my head slightly I could see the whole space below, which was wholly exposed in full daylight.

"An ordinary drawing-room chair was about six inches from the table on the opposite side, six feet from Dr. Slade. A heavy arm-chair was in the corner of the room, about the same distance from him and from the table. A slate of the ordinary school size and a piece of slate pencil were upon the table.

"Instantly upon taking our seats, very loud rapping came upon the floor. This was followed by a succession of furious blows upon the table, jarring my hands as they were lying upon it. These blows were repeated at any part of the table desired, by merely touching that spot with the finger, while the blows, as forcible as if given with a sledge hammer, were being made.

"Dr. Slade's hands were on the table upon my hands, and his whole body to his feet was fully before my eyes. I am certain that not a muscle moved. Then he took the slate, after I had carefully inspected it, to be assured that no writing was upon it; and placing there a piece of slate pencil, the size of a small grain of wheat, he pressed the slate tightly below but against the slab of the table.

"Presently I heard the sound as of writing on a slate. The slate was removed, and on it a zigzag line was drawn from end to end.

"At this moment the chair that I had described as standing by the table was lifted up to a level with the table, held in that position for several seconds, and then dropped to the floor. While the chair was so suspended in the air, I carefully noted Dr. Slade. It was far beyond his reach. Both his hands were under my hands, and his feet were fully in view

near my own, on the side of the table opposite to that on which the chair had risen.

"While I was taking note of his position at this moment, a hand rudely grasped my knee on the opposite side to where Dr. Slade was seated, and his hands were still in mine on the table. Blows of a more gentle kind upon the table, attended with a remarkable quivering of it, announced, as he said, that his wife was present, and desired the slate.

"After the slate had been carefully cleaned, it was laid upon the top of the table, with a like piece of pencil under it. Upon the slate he placed his right hand, and I placed my left hand; and with my other hand I held his left hand as it lay upon the table.

"As my hand lay upon the slate, I could feel, and did distinctly hear, something writing upon it. The communication was evidently a long one; but before I report the result, I desire to note a remarkable phenomenon, to my mind the most suggestive that attended his experiment.

"It is necessary clearly to understand the position of the parties, therefore I repeat it. Dr. Slade and myself sat face to face. One hand of each of us was laid upon the slate. The side of the slate that was being written upon was pressed by us against the table. Our second hands were linked together, and lay upon the table. While this position was preserved, the writing proceeded without a pause. When Dr. Slade removed his hand from mine, it ceased instantly, and as instantly was renewed when his hand and mine met.

"This experiment was repeated several times, and never failed.

"Here, then, was a chain or circle formed by my arms and body and Dr. Slade's arms and body, the slate being between us, my hand at one end of it, his hand at the other end, and between our hands, and upon the slate that connected them, the writing was. When the chain was broken, forthwith the writing ceased. When the chain was re-formed, the writing was at once resumed. The effect was instantaneous.

"In this curious fact we must seek the clue to this psychological mystery. Some rapid rappings indicating that the writing was finished, the slate was lifted, and in a clear and perfectly distinct writing the following was read. It filled the whole side of the slate:—

"DEAR SERJ.—You are now investigating a subject that is worthy of all the time that you or any other man of mind can devote to its investigation. When man can believe in this truth, it will in most cases make him a better man. This is our object in coming to earth—to make man and woman better, wiser, and purer.—I am truly,

"A. W. SLADE."

"While I was reading this, a hand again grasped my knee farthest from Dr. Slade, whose hands were at that moment holding the slate, that I might copy the writing. As I wrote, a hand, which I saw distinctly, came from under the table, seized my waistcoat, and pulled it violently.

"Seeing this, I took the pencil with which I was copying the words, and laid it at the edge of the

table farthest from Dr. Slade, and far beyond his reach—the end of the pencil projecting about two inches over the ledge.

"I asked if the hand would take the pencil. Forthwith a hand came from under the table, seized the pencil, and threw it upon the floor.

"I again asked that it would pick up the pencil, and bring it to me.

"In a minute it was brought, and put upon the table by my side.

"I saw the hand that brought it as distinctly as I could see my own. It was a small hand, seemingly that of a woman.

"Again the slate was cleaned, and laid upon the table as before, my hand upon it. In a few seconds, the following sentence was written. Considerable power was used in this writing, and I could distinctly feel the pressure of the pencil upon the slate, and its motion as every word was written:—

"I am Dr. John Forbes. I was the Queen's physician. God bless you.

"J. FORBES."

"While I was reading this, the hand again came from under the table, and seized the sleeve of my coat, and tried to pull my arm down; but I resisted, and it disappeared. Then it came up again, as if from my legs, and caught the eyeglass that was hanging from my neck, and opened it.

"During all these phenomena, Dr. Slade's hands were before me on the table, and his feet full in my view upon the floor. The hand on each occasion came from the side of the table opposite to where Dr. Slade was sitting. He was seated on my left, and the hand came and seized me on my right leg, in a position impossible to him. The hand I saw was not half the size of Dr. Slade's hand. It touched my hand three times, and I could feel that it was warm, soft, and moist, and as solid and fleshly as my own.

"Again the slate was cleaned, and held under the table tight against the wood, one half of it projecting against the edge, so that I might be assured that it was tightly pressed against the wood; but the slate was seized, and with great force drawn away, and rapidly raised above me, and placed upon my head. In this position the sound of writing upon it was distinctly heard by me. On removing it, I found written upon it the following words:—

"Man must not doubt any more, when we can come in this way.

"J. F., M.D."

"Then the large arm-chair rushed forward, from the corner of the room in which it had been placed, to the table. Again the slate was placed under the table, and projecting from it. A hand twice seized and shook my leg, both of the hands of Dr. Slade being at the moment before me, and his whole person before me. Thus ended this experiment.

"All that I have reported was done, that is certain. How it was done, and by what agency, is a problem for psychology to solve.

"For my own part, I can say only that I was in the full possession of my senses; that I was wide

awake; that it was in broad daylight; that Dr. Slade was under my observation the whole time, and could not have moved hand or foot without being detected by me.

"That it was not a self-delusion is shown by this, that any person who chooses to go may see almost the same phenomena. I offer no opinion upon their causes, for I have formed none. If they be genuine, it is impossible to exaggerate their interest and importance. If they be an imposture, it is equally important that the trick should be exposed in the only way in which trickery can be explained, by doing the same thing, and showing how it is done."

What does it mean? Is it fact, or was the sergeant deceived? For our part, we are puzzled.

Turn Mother's Face to the Wall.

TURN Mother's face to the wall, Alice;

To-morrow, you know, is the day
Father brings hither his fair young bride—

Wealthily dower'd, they say.

And not a year older than you, Alice,

Three summers ripier than I:

Young for his wife; yet welcome is hers,

Other than dowers could buy.

When we hopelessly hunger'd for mother, Alice,

Father wept him a wife;

Whose was the heavier loss, I wonder?

Whose is the barren life?

He is glad to come back to the old roof, Alice,

With one in his heart to adore;

Mother, sweet Mother! our idol is broken!

We may kiss your cheek no more.

Turn Mother's face to the wall, Alice,

To the end she would not doubt—

The light of *his* love to lower with her death!

Another to crush it out!

And all her proud talk was of him, Alice,

A man in a thousand men!

Now she is gone, and the husband she loved

Merrily marries again!

Still, he is our dear Father, Alice,

And so let us do our best

To trim up the house with daughterly hands,

That it smile on his girlish guest:

Yet—turn Mother's face to the wall, Alice,

We'll turn it back some day,

Perchance, when we talk of the sweet-eyed saint—

I wonder what *she* will say?

Her eyes, I hear, are like yours, Alice,

Her hair is the colour of mine;

Turn the picture back for a minute,

Behold the luminous shine

Of Mother's beautiful curls, Alice;

Shame the sheen of her eyes,

Young Bride, if you can—oh! what am I saying?

Low in the grave she lies.

Will she weep at our story with us, Alice?

Will she kiss your tears and mine?

May be not; yet our Mother's girls

Are all too proud to pine.

Turn that good face to the wall, Alice,

There: kneel we here at home,

To ask that God will help us to suffer

Whatever trouble may come.

BYRON WEBBER.

Three Hundred Virgins.

A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS.

CHAPTER VI.—THE VIRGIN ISLAND.

DAYLIGHT at last, and with it the wind fallen to a dead calm. There was a rosy flush in the sky, which, coming through the dim skylights, showed the wretched aspect of the saturated cabin.

"No sink dis time, mass' doctor, sah," said 'Thello, returning to Helston's side, as he finished an examination of Laurent, who lay, pale and insensible, in the cot—"we safe ashore, sah."

"Can you hear anybody on deck?"

"No, sah; dis chile tink dey go off in de boat, or all wash away by de sea, and we hab de wreck to ourselves."

"Horrible!" exclaimed Helston. "Hark! what was that?"

"Dat am de women," said Othello, showing his white teeth. "Dey all squeal to be let out."

"Come along, 'Thello," said Helston.

And he forced open the cabin window, beat out the dead light, and half climbed out, to try and get upwards to the deck.

Two or three trials, though, resulted in failure; and as the sun rose, gilding the ship till she shone like refined gold, and filling the cabin with a flood of light, Helston looked down into the clear water below.

"We must drop down, and swim ashore, 'Thello," said Helston, "and trust to chance to climb on board and set the women at liberty."

"Wait lilly bit, sah, and let's see how far we are off de shore," said 'Thello, forcing out his woolly head.

"About a quarter of a mile," said Helston.

"What ebber de good of go dere to get board de ship? You swim ashore, and swim back, and go round de ship; but, less lilly rope hang down, how you get on deck, sah?"

Helston saw the force of his arguments, and stood thinking.

"Yah, yah! Look dere, sah!" yelled the black.

And he pointed down into the amber water, illumined, as it was, by the sun.

Helston shuddered, for gliding slowly round the ship, about two feet below the surface, were one—two—four—seven sharks, of from five to eight or nine feet long.

"You tink you swim round dis ship now, sah?" said 'Thello. "No, sah, no swim at all. Look at de debbles."

As he spoke, one of the monsters gave itself a roll on one side, so as to show its whiteness; then, with a stroke of its vigorous tail, it glided onwards out of sight, closely followed by the others.

Helston took a quick glance round, to see on his right the beautiful shores of some strange land, with tall, waving palms, and a rich undergrowth of trees,

coming apparently close to the water's edge; while inland the place seemed to rise into quite a mountain, which looked of a delicate rosy hue in the morning light. Inhabitants there seemed to be none visible.

Away to the left was the open sea, with about half a mile away a long sandy bar, upon which the sea broke heavily still, though beyond it the surface looked smooth, only heaved and fell in great undulations, which glistened in the sun.

"We must try the skylight, 'Thello," said Helston. "Those poor women must be half suffocated."

"Not dey, sah," said 'Thello, grinning; "hark at dem, how dey sing in de lilly cage!"

For at that moment a loud shriek or cry plainly reached their ears.

"There can be nobody on deck," said Helston, as he climbed on the table, and reached up.

"Not a single nobody, sah," said 'Thello, "or we been up dar before now. You no open him, sah?"

"I can get it open, 'Thello; but it's all strongly covered with wire, and even then there would not be room to crawl out."

"Nebber mine, Mass' Helston, sah—I got my knife. Golly, him berry strange if we no can't cut de way out trough de door."

Without another word Othello opened a great jack knife, and began hacking away at the panel of the strongly made door, upon which he had made very little effect when there was a loud splash and rushing noise under the stern windows, which made them both run aft, to gaze upon a sight which held them to the spot enchained by horror; for the clear water was now becoming stained of a hideous red, as half a dozen sharks made havoc of the body of one of the unfortunate sailors that had evidently been washing slowly ashore.

They turned away at last as one of the sharks shot off, making the water flash and shimmer with a hundred hues, and 'Thello said, in a loud, frightened tone—

"You no tink more 'bout swim 'shore, mass' doctor, af' dat?"

At this moment there was a loud cry on deck, followed by a babble of voices, and the hurrying of footsteps.

"They've got on deck," cried Helston, joyfully.

"Hey! hi! captain! sailors!" cried a voice.

"Golly, sah, dat de she-griffum woman," said 'Thello, in an awe-stricken voice.

"Here, this way, Mrs. Burrows," shouted Helston, in reply.

"Some one in the cabin," cried half a dozen voices; and a rush was made in their direction.

"Who's in here?" cried Deborah Burrows, then.

"Mr. Laurent, the mate; Othello, the cook; and Charles Helston," said the latter. "Can you take away what wedges the door?"

"No," was the reply; "one of the boats is crushed up against it with a big spar. Where are the captain and the sailors?"

"The captain was washed over," said Helston, "early in the storm. Are there no sailors there?"

"We can't see a soul," said another voice. "Can't you get out?"

"Yes, if you make fast a rope, and lower it down over the stern windows," said Helston.

There was a rush of feet, and, after a time, a rope came swinging down; and Helston, leaning out, could speak to some of the girls hanging over the stern.

"Is it fast?"

"Yes, quite safe; and we are holding it too," cried several voices.

"Better keep 'em there," said a voice, with a grim laugh. "I don't know that we want 'em."

Helston recognized Deborah Burrows' voice.

"For shame, Mrs. Burrows; and at such a time too!" said another voice, as Helston seized the rope, and he knew that it was Mary Dance who spoke.

"Golly! take care, Mass' Helston—make de sharks come see you swing, sah!" shouted 'Thello.

But Charles Helston was active and strong. With the aid of the rope he had very little difficulty; and in a few seconds he was on the poop-deck, seeing to the security of the rope, as the black cook made the best of his way after him.

It was a strange sight, as they stood there in the midst of the crowd of sorrow, dirty, dishevelled women, who had been shut up for days almost without food, and who now looked gaunt and wild on the shattered decks of the great, mastless ship.

"Are you the only men left on board, then?" said Deborah, pushing to the front.

"I am afraid so," said Helston—"excepting poor Mr. Laurent, who is much injured, below."

There was a sharp, hysterical sob heard here, and Deborah looked round, her eyes lighting on the pale face of Mary Dance, which was quite impassive.

"Was that you, my dear?" said Deborah.

"If it was, I should not tell you," said Mary Dance, boldly.

"And how are you all?" said Helston, looking anxiously round.

"Half dead, and so hungry, sir," chorused fifty voices. "What shall we do?"

Helston saw Deborah's eyes fixed upon him.

"It is a terrible catastrophe," he said; "but follow my directions, and I will do the best to alleviate our sufferings. We are in no danger now; so the first thing is to get at the provisions, and then after awhile we must try to get ashore. 'Thello!"

"I here, sah," said that individual, standing rubbing his wool, and grinning. "I know, mass' doctor—you want um braxfuss. Well, we try and get um."

A search was first made, though, through the vessel, for them to find that the fore-castle was still battened down; and as there was not a boat left save the broken one which wedged in the cabin door, it seemed evident that the crew had, in a time of panic, taken to the sea, leaving the helpless women to their fate.

Such were the young doctor's thoughts; but he did not give them utterance.

"The poor fellows must have shared the captain's fate, and been swept overboard," he said to those about him.

And he pointed to the torn bulwarks, the denuded deck, and utter absence of everything upon which the waves could vent their spleen.

But his eye met that of Deborah Burrows as he spoke, and he saw that she did not believe him, from her mocking look.

Continuing their examination, it seemed that the hull of the vessel was but little injured; and this promised hopefully as to provisions—plenty of biscuit and water having been found by Thello, who now summoned them aft, where the simple meal was distributed, to be attacked with avidity.

As Helston looked round, he now for the first time caught sight of Grace Monroe, looking very pale, as she sat with downcast eyes upon the deck, side by side with Mary Dance, before whom the biscuit lay untasted.

For the women had grouped themselves about on the deck, drinking in, with brightening eyes, the soft, balmy air; and, now that the dread of immediate danger was removed, feeling more curiosity than any other sensation as they appeased their hunger.

Helston's next movement was to move the broken boat, by means of the leverage of a small spar, and the way down to the cabin was once more open, where Laurent lay in a state half sleep, half stupor.

"I must have a nurse for the injured man in the cabin," said Helston, returning to the group, whom he scanned eagerly. "Where is the matron—Mrs. Kent?"

"Dead!" said a harsh voice—"suffocated in that den you brave men forced us into, that you might take the boats, and leave us to our fate."

"You must know, Deborah Burrows, that you were safer below," said Helston, firmly; "and that it was for your good you were placed there."

"It's a lie!" she exclaimed, fiercely.

"And if any of the crew did desert the ship," he continued, without heeding her words, "I fear that the poor fellows paid for it dearly. But I want some one to act as nurse to poor Mr. Laurent, who is badly hurt."

"Consult with me, then," said Deborah Burrows, sharply. "I'm leader here now."

"I will wait on Mr. Laurent, sir," said a voice; and Mary Dance came quietly forward. "I have been used to attend on sick people."

"Thank you," said Helston.

And a bright look of pleasure crossed his face as he led the way to the cabin.

"Hy-yah, hy-yah!" laughed Othello, coming up grinning. "Dese berry hard times, ladies; but—hy-yah, hy-yah!—we make um softer. You no frow de tater to-day, Ma'am Burrows, 'cause dere none to frow till me get um up."

Deborah made a half-start forward, but she restrained herself.

"Now, lilly dears," said Thello, "I fine something make you all smile—plenty tea and sugar, eh? Now, two ob you come an' help dis chile cut wood and boil water, and I make you all lubbly cup o' tea."

Twenty girls started up on the instant; but Deborah Burrows checked them.

"You go, Sarah Lee; and you, Ann Smith. That will do."

"Hy-yah, hy-yah! Yes, dat 'll do," said Thello. "Dere's tub o' butter, too, and bimeby I get below at de taters."

CHAPTER VII.—REVERSING.

"THERE, women," exclaimed Deborah, as soon as the black had gone forward, "do you see? Here are two men and a black monkey on board, and we—we women—are to be their hewers of wood and drawers of water; their slaves, to be ordered about to nurse, to cut wood, to boil water. In an hour they will set us to mend the boat, and row them ashore. I tell you that it has lasted too long, and that now is the time to show your spirit, and teach them their place. They dare not retaliate—we are too many. Let them take our places. Let this jackanapes doctor be taught his, and that black beast of burden do our work for us, if this is to be our home. It is some uninhabited island, for certain; and here we shall have to stay till help comes. Let us strike, then, and—"

"Shame!" exclaimed a clear, thrilling voice.

The crowd of women started.

"Who said that?" cried Deborah, fiercely.

"I did," said Grace Monroe, coming forward to confront her. "I say it is a shame for you to preach such unwholesome doctrines of insubordination, at a time when we have hardly escaped from an awful death, and every hand should be raised to help in a sisterly way."

Here there was a murmur of applause.

"Hark at her!" exclaimed Deborah, whose eyes flashed with anger. "Silence, you silly chit!"

"I will not be silent," said Grace, firmly; "and you who hear us, I appeal to and ask you to set aside these foolish notions, and let us help one another."

There was another murmur here; and it was evident that the words of Grace Monroe were of more effect than those of Deborah.

"Silence!" she cried, angrily. "Wait till you are asked to speak. She is the doctor's pet, girls—his favourite—and—"

"How dare you—you insolent woman!" exclaimed Grace, springing forward.

The answer was a heavy blow across her face.

As the blow fell, though, the striker was swung round, sent staggering back, and would have fallen, but for one of the women, who caught her, while Charles Helston stepped forward, and would have taken Grace Monroe's hands, but she shrunk away.

"You see—you see!" shrieked Deborah. "What do you think of it? You saw that coward strike me—a woman. Are we to suffer it?"

"If I had been quick enough," cried Mary Dance, "I'd have boxed your ears till you were dizzy—you bad, evil, cruel woman. Mr. Helston only swung you away—you malicious wretch."

"Let there be no more of this," said the young doctor, speaking excitedly. "My good girls, this is no time for petty quarrelling. Let Deborah Burrows enjoy her own opinions; we have to think of getting ashore, and keeping ourselves alive. I must ask you, then, to obey me, in place of your late matron."

"You hear?" cried Deborah, tauntingly.

"Miss Burrows, will you be silent?" exclaimed Helston, angrily.

"No, young man," exclaimed that lady, "I shall

not. Your reign is over, and it is your turn to obey. Women—you who have any self-respect—come to my side, and let us show these lords of creation that in time of emergency we can think and act for ourselves."

She drew aside, and about three parts of the women grouped about her; while the remainder, amongst whom were Grace Monroe and Mary Dance, stood firm.

"Look," said Deborah, pointing to the little group, tauntingly—"look, girls! These are the women who have no self-respect; they prefer to be the slaves of the men."

"No, we don't," said two or three.

And then there was a short discussion, which ended in their walking forward and joining the rest, leaving Mary Dance standing alone, when a burst of hisses ensued as Deborah pointed at her.

"See the creature!" she said. "Let her stay. We'll teach her her place."

"You brazen thing!" retorted Mary, angrily. "Of course I shall stay. Do you suppose I offer to nurse a sick man one minute, and follow you and your mad notions the next? If there is any woman amongst you who calls herself my friend, let her laugh at your malicious remarks, and come and stand by me."

As she spoke, Grace Monroe, who had shrunk into the hatchway after the blow she had received from Deborah's hand, now came forward slowly, with a red mark across her cheek, and went and laid her hand upon Mary's arm, but only to have it flung round her directly; and the two girls stood alone, proud and defiant, prepared for the storm of jeers which they expected to fall upon their heads.

There was a sharp hiss, but one only, and it came from Deborah Burrows. Of three hundred other women not one followed the example, but stood looking with admiration at the two brave girls standing alone upon the deck.

But not with such admiration as made the cheek of Charles Helston flush, and his heart beat faster, as he stood watching them for a few moments. Then he stepped forward, and frankly held out his hand.

"Thank you, Mary Dance; thank you, Grace Monroe," he said, quietly. "If it is to be war, I am glad to have some friends on my side. I shall not forget this."

Grace trembled, but she stood erect, with her eyes downcast, and let the young doctor take Mary's hand, accompanying them to the cabin, where they were soon afterwards in attendance upon Laurent, who now began to show signs of returning animation, and at length opened his eyes and stared round, smiled as he recognized the faces, and then lay apparently trying to collect his thoughts.

"Arm broken?" he said at last, in a feeble voice.

"Yes," said Helston, smiling; "but you are coming round."

"My head pains me," said Laurent, and his brow contracted, as he was silent for a moment or two. "Ah, I recollect now—cutting away the masts."

"Yes, you were caught in the hamper," said Helston; "but I would not talk more now. Try and get a little sleep."

"One moment—where are we?—the ship?"

"Wrecked—ashore somewhere," said Helston, quietly; "but in no immediate danger."

"Helston, get me right again—quickly," whispered the injured man.

The doctor smiled, smoothed his pillow with all a woman's care, and then closed his eyes by passing his hand over them.

"Help me, then," he said, "by being quiet. Mary Dance, open that window, and keep the cabin cool; moisten his lips with water from time to time. I shall be back soon. You had both better keep within these cabins."

He took a telescope down from the side, and went out, to find the women busy about the deck under the directions of Deborah Burrows.

The bedding from below was being spread in the sun. Some were washing, others cleaning, and others apparently making preparation for a better meal.

As Helston walked forward there was a loud shout, and a struggle in the midst of a crowd of women, from whom Othello broke, to rush to Helston's side.

"What de debble, sah! De women all go mad, sah; and order me 'bout till I no know what to do, sah."

"Bring that black fellow back," cried Deborah Burrows, in a voice of authority; "let him get on with his cooking."

In an instant Othello was surrounded by a dozen of the girls, and, half laughing, half angry, he was hustled back to the wreck of his galley, to go on preparing for a big boil, gesticulating and remonstrating the while.

"They'll be tired of it in a day or two. How absurd!" muttered Helston. And a smile crossed his lip, in spite of his annoyance, as muttering "A feminine mutiny," he adjusted the glass, and began to scan the shore.

The day was now glorious, and but for the wreck he might have imagined that he was by some paradise where storm could never come. For there before him, as he swept the shore, were limpid water; golden sand, fringed with a rippling of silver spray; bushes, bright with many-coloured flowers; waving trees; hill and mountain, green and golden to their summits; vale and ravine, with trickling streams of water, and protection from the principal force of the tempest by the bar which, as far as he could see, ran right along the shore.

Habitations, or sign of natives? None that he could make out. Not the slightest token of the foot of man ever having pressed the shore. It was a virgin land, as far as he could see; and, with a bitter smile on his lip, as he asked himself was it an island—and this it appeared to be—he said, half aloud—

"Then we'll call it Virgin Island."

Wild beasts? Not a sign of any; but there seemed to be plenty of gay-plumaged birds. And, as he glanced down into the lagoon, where the ship lay aground, bright-scaled fish flashed by in the sun-illuminated waters.

He walked to the stern, and stood on the corner of the skylight, gazing intently through the glass in every direction, to see nothing but the bright lights and dark shadows of an exquisitely beautiful shore;

and as he stood, closing his glass, he said, quietly, half aloud—

"An island, without doubt; and no other land in sight. The next thing will be to get ashore, explore a bit, and climb that mountain with the glass, that will decide the question of isle or mainland, and show me where to look for help.

"Good heavens!" he said again, "is it to be a Robinson Crusoe life, or is it a dream?"

"No dream," he said, smiling, as a loud burst of chattering came from forward. "Well, I shall be better off than Crusoe; for I start with my black Man Friday, and I shall have a companion. More still, I can have a wife—if I can win her!" he added, gently.

He opened the glass again, and swept the horizon seaward, but not a sign of land lay in that direction; and he closed it again, saying, in a loud voice—

"I am monarch of all I survey!"

When a hand was clapped heavily upon his shoulder, and a harsh voice said—

"Indeed, Mr. Doctor! I want a few words with you."

He turned sharply round, to stand face to face with Deborah Burrows.

Seals and Sealing.

JUDGING from statistics, there seems to be no doubt that the fate of the timid-looking seal is to become as extinct as the dodo. On our own shores, on the most out-of-the-way parts of the coast of Cornwall, caverns are pointed out as the abode of this creature; but whenever, gun-armed, I have gone in a boat, at most unearthly hours of the morning, it has been to find the seals conspicuous by their absence. Better luck has attended me on the western shores of Scotland; for there I have seen seals, though in spite of braving the "mists peculiar to the country," and shivering in the wet at a rate that the mountain dew would hardly check, I never arrived within shooting distance.

If you wish to see the capture of the seal with anything like success, it must be by taking a trip due north; and the farther—in moderation—you penetrate within the Arctic circle, the more satisfactory will be your sport. We know the seal here merely for its production of a very rank, unpleasant smelling oil, and since the introduction of gas, and the many forms of mineral oil "struck" by the Yankees, that of the seal has become less and less a necessity. I do not wish to set anybody against so pleasant and health-giving a beverage, but I have a strong suspicion that those clear-looking bottles of limpidity labelled "Cod Liver" often have a very strong infusion of the oil of the seal.

By the natives of the higher wastes of Norway, and the wild, barren, rugged shores of Greenland, the seal is looked upon in the shape of a harvest; for the Greenlander feeds on him, dresses out of him, supplies himself with ropes, window glass, candles, and many of the other necessities to make his chilly life bearable, and generally utilizes the amphibious creature which Nature has been kind enough to send in no slight abundance.

In these parts of the world the capture of a seal is not accomplished without considerable danger, and the hunter, who pursues the creature in his small native canoe, stands no small chance of having his arm, or even his neck, caught in the line attached to his weapon—in the latter case being sometimes strangled and drowned before he can extricate himself.

At other times, when the fisherman, thinking the animal dead, approaches to take possession of his prey, it will dash at his arm, or even at his face, and bite viciously. They are particularly dangerous when they have young ones to defend: on such occasions they will rush at the frail boats of their pursuers, and actually tear holes in them with their teeth, when the canoes quickly fill and go to the bottom, taking with them their occupants, who are securely fastened to the skins which form the covering of the canoes to make them water-tight.

In the autumn, when the seals enter the fiords in large quantities, the natives assemble in force to drive them towards the shore, and kill them with lances. When the animals try to take refuge on the banks, they are attacked by the women and children, who are provided with lances for throwing, and the work is finished by the men with their heavier harpoons.

In winter, holes are made in the ice, that the animals may come and breathe; and as soon as one makes his appearance, he is almost sure to fall an easy prey to the watchful native. The greater number, though, are caught in the open water, the inhabitants of these northern regions following them, in some of the small canoes already mentioned, into one of the fiords which are so numerous upon the coast, and in which bays and roads are almost surrounded by barren granite rocks. Here the paddles of the rowers shine in the sun, but cause scarcely a sound in the water, silence being an indispensable aid to success. They then quietly search for their game, following closely the indentations of the coast, nothing probably being visible but a few sea birds flying over their heads, and uttering cries of alarm or warning. All at once, though, a dark object appears on the horizon, when the fishermen separate, and place themselves at regular intervals, so as to form a semicircle, the two extremities of which point in the direction of the shore; for this black object is a seal, and, as it comes nearer, the half circle of canoes contracts more and more. Then two of the men dart rapidly forward, gliding along as though their boats were passing over ice. The first man is then seen to lean over the edge of his light craft, and, suddenly throwing himself forward, he hurls the harpoon with which he is armed, and the instrument flies like an arrow, drawing out after it the line of hide to which it is fastened.

Pierced with this well-barbed lance, as it is almost certain to be, the seal immediately dives, and soon nothing is seen but the great bladder, which is attached to an end of the line, and which necessarily remains on the surface of the sea. A patch of reddened water shows the place where the animal was struck.

A few moments after, it reappears, and seems to beg for mercy, opening its great limpid eyes. The

appeal, if appeal it be, is, however, thrown away upon the stolid fisher, and in a few minutes the poor brute is despatched by blows on the nose from a paddle, another lance, or even from the clenched fist of its captor.

The seal is then hauled between two canoes, fastened together, moored to them by two leather straps passing under the fins, and is left in this position, while he whose daring has secured the prey now takes it in tow.

The blow aimed at the seals by the harpooner seldom misses its aim. The wound greatly resembles the one produced by a bullet; but the bullet would have killed the animal without capturing it, whereas, by the use of the harpoon, with a line and bladder attached, it can always be easily recovered.

The inhabitants of the north coast of Scotland hunt the seal in a manner that is equally peculiar and dangerous; for, knowing that they retire occasionally with their young into the large caves along the coast, generally choosing those with narrow entrances, the Scotchmen follow them there in the middle of the night during the month of October or November. They row to the mouth of the cave in a light boat, and then penetrate into its recesses, when they suddenly strike lights and utter loud cries. At the sudden light and unaccustomed sounds, the seals quit their retreat in the utmost confusion. The intrepid Scotchmen dart back to the sides of the cavern, to let the greater part go by, and then fall upon the laggards, despatch them by heavy blows on the nose, and then carry the bodies outside.

A few lines will not be out of place here respecting that fiercest of the seal family—the sea lion—whose habits are thus interestingly described by that most clever and observant of our naturalists, Mr. Henry Lee:—

“The sea lion in remote or secluded places is more shy and wary than the fur seal; but when accustomed to the sight of men, as on the Californian coast, often frequents thickly inhabited localities, entering inland bays and rivers, and at times disporting itself among the shipping. But we learn, from the authors already quoted, that its habits and the mode of its capture are everywhere alike in all essential particulars. On the Prybylov Islands, as well as on the Californian coast, the males make their appearance about the first week in May, at first in small numbers, but soon afterwards more plentifully. On their arrival they leap out of and dart through the water with surprising rapidity, frequently diving outside the rollers, and the next moment emerging from beneath the crest of a breaker. Waddling up the beach, or climbing the rocks with seeming effort, each veteran ‘bull’—some of them are over twenty years old—makes his way to a spot in the ‘rookery,’ as it is called, which he has occupied in former years, whilst those who come for the first time as full-grown members of the community (never under six years of age), select a new station, where they will await the arrival of the females. The space of ground over which each endeavours to secure complete control is generally about a rod in extent; but unless he is strong enough to defend

and hold it against all antagonists, he is quickly ousted from it by a new-comer, and forced to ‘take a back seat.’ The labour of maintaining a position in the rookery is really a serious business for those bulls which occupy the water line, and their combats often result in death.

“Mr. Elliott’s remarks on the fur seal will also apply to the sea lions:—‘Some of the bulls,’ he says, ‘show wonderful strength and courage. I have marked one veteran, who was among the first to take up his position, and that one on the water line, when at least fifty or sixty desperate battles were fought victoriously by him with nearly as many different seals, who coveted his position; and when the fighting season was over, I saw him covered with scars, gashes raw and bloody, an eye gouged out, but lording it bravely over his harem of fifteen or twenty cows, all huddled together on the same spot he had first chosen. The fighting is mostly or entirely done with the mouth, the opponents seizing each other with the teeth, and clenching the jaws: nothing but sheer strength can shake them loose; and that effort almost always leaves an ugly wound, the sharp incisors tearing out deep gutters in the skin and blubber, or shredding the flippers into ribbon strips. They usually approach each other with averted heads and a great many false passes before either one or the other takes the initiative by gripping; the head is darted out and back as quick as a flash, their hoarse roaring and quick, piping whistle never ceasing, their fat bodies writhing and swelling with exertion and rage, fur flying in air, and blood streaming down—all combined, make a picture fierce and savage enough, and, from its great novelty, exceedingly strange at first sight.

“In these battles the parties are always distinct—the offensive and the defensive; if the latter proves the weaker, he withdraws from the position occupied, and is never followed by his conqueror, who complacently throws up one of his hind flippers, and fans himself, as it were, to cool himself from the heat of the conflict, with a peculiar chuckle of satisfaction or contempt, and with a sharp eye open for the next covetous bull.’ The young males are not allowed to land.

“The cows come up from the sea from the 1st to the 6th June. ‘As soon as one reaches the shore,’ says Captain Bryant, ‘the nearest male goes down to meet her, making a noise like the clucking of a hen to her chickens. He bows to her, and coaxes her, until he gets between her and the water, so that she cannot escape from him; then his manner changes, and, with a harsh growl, he drives her to a place in his harem. This continues until the lower row of harems is nearly full. Then the males higher up select a time when their more fortunate neighbours are off their guard to steal their wives. This they do by taking them in their mouths, lifting them over the heads of the other females, and carefully placing them in their own harems, carrying them as cats do their kittens. Those still higher up pursue the same method, until the whole space is occupied.’ Each bull thus takes under his protection from ten to fifteen cows.

“By the 10th or 15th of July all the cows have arrived, and at the most frequented ‘rookeries’ every

yard of beach or cliff where a sea lion can find space to turn round becomes its resting-place. The air is foggy with their breath, and at this time the noise arising from these breeding-grounds is said to be simply 'indescribable.' The roaring of the old males alone is loud enough to drown the sound of the heaviest surf among the rocks and caverns, and with it the hoarse croaking of the crows, and the bleating of the young, form such a din of tumultuous utterances that the united clamour of the vast assemblage can be heard on a calm day for miles at sea. They live on fish, cuttles, crustaceans, and sea fowl. The manner in which they capture the latter displays no little cunning. When in pursuit, the sea lion dives deeply under water, and swims to some distance from where it disappeared; then, rising cautiously, it exposes the top of its nose above the surface, at the same time giving it a rotatory motion, like that of a water insect at play. As the unwary bird alights to catch it, the animal sinks momentarily beneath the waves, and then, rising, at one bound seizes its screaming and startled prey.

"The sea lions are taken and killed as follows. Selecting a semi-moonlight night, the natives, in a party, stealthily approach the herd, and, crawling on hands and knees, manage to get between them and the water. At a given signal, they all at once jump on their feet, yell, brandish their arms, &c., and so alarm the animals that they are afraid to pass the *cordon* of men and take to the sea, and thus are urged inland, and driven into small pens, where they are detained until two or three hundred are assembled. Those which are beyond the line of the *battue* of course escape; and instances have been known of their diving, in their sudden terror, from a height of sixty feet into the sea, without apparently sustaining any injury.

To collect the desired number of sea lions occupies several days, and to drive them to their destination—the killing and salting station—five or six more; for their progress on land is so slow and awkward that they cannot be made to travel more than two or three miles in twenty-four hours. At first they will often look threatening and defiant, but generally retreat from the approach of man, if not opposed in their efforts to escape. The sea lion is, however, a rather dangerous animal, and the men are often seriously hurt whilst driving it. Formerly, the implement employed to scare and guide them was a pole with a flag at the end of it, with which they were driven like a flock of geese or ducks along an English country road; but American ingenuity has recently brought into use for this purpose the cotton umbrella, and it is said that any refractory sea lion is instantly subdued by the sudden expansion and closing of the 'gamp' in the hands of the pursuing native.

After the drove of sea lions has been brought to the village, the animals are huddled together in a crowd, and, whilst impeding one another by treading on each other's flippers, the small ones are speared and the larger ones shot.

"By the Aleuts and Kamschatkans, the 'see-vitchie,' as they call it, is highly prized. The annual sea lion drive is to them that which the buffalo hunt is to the redskins of the prairies. They con-

sider its dark flesh palatable and nutritious, and the meat of a young cub is said to be juicy and tender, and something like veal in flavour. That which is not required for immediate use is either stored and kept fresh for a time in underground vaults, or cut in thin strips, and dried in the open air for winter food. The hide is used in making covers for houses and boats. Many skins, carefully joined together, are stretched whilst wet over wooden frames of proper shape, and barges, called 'bidarrahs,' of considerable size—even of twenty tons burden—are thus constructed. To prepare them for this purpose, the skins are spread, as soon as taken from the animal, in piles of twenty-five each, and left to heat till the hair is loosened. It is then scraped off, and the pelt stretched on frames to dry.

"On the coast of Siberia, Kamschatka, and the Island of Saghalien, thongs of sea lions' skins are used for making seal nets. The salmon which swarm in the inlets and rivers of those Asiatic regions are followed by herds of seals, which prey upon them as they ascend the streams. The natives set their strong nets in places left nearly bare at low tide; free passage is given by the size of the mesh to the shoals of fish; but the pursuing seals are entangled by the head, and held in the meshes till low water, when their captors go out to them in their flat-bottomed hide boats, and despatch them with clubs. The prepared hide is also used as harness for sledge-dogs and reindeer, and, when dressed and made pliable by rolling in the hands, for the soles of mocassins. The soft skins of the young are used for clothing.

"From the double coating of fat or blubber, separated by a thin layer of muscular tissue, and lying between the skin and the flesh of the body, is produced, by boiling and pressure, oil of excellent quality, though somewhat inferior to that of the sea elephant. An adult male sea lion will yield about forty gallons of this oil. The residue, after the oil has been obtained from it, is used as fuel. It is remarkable that whilst the blubber of the fur seal is most offensive to taste and smell, that of the sea lion is free from any disagreeable flavour or odour. The stomach is turned inside out, cleaned, inflated, dried, and converted into an oil bottle. The intestines are cleansed and stretched to dry, and of them waterproof coats and frocks are made. The lining of the oesophagus is used for making boots, which are soled with the tough, strong skin of the flippers. The sinews are employed instead of thread or string, and of the bones are manufactured needles, tool handles, and other rude implements. The longest bristles of the whiskers, of which there are from thirty-one to thirty-six on each side of the face, are used as personal ornaments in China, where, also, certain organs of the animal are regarded as of medicinal value, as the 'castorum' of the beaver still is in this country. All that is edible of the remainder is given to the dogs; so that when these northern people have done with it, very little is left of a dead sea lion."

WE hear of a musical association that is over fifty years old. One or two young ladies have belonged to it ever since it was organized.

A New Material.

COMPARATIVELY but few of the numerous inventions daily cropping up are financial successes, although they may have had a lifetime spent on their perfection; yet in many cases, from unexplainable causes, the majority have but an ephemeral existence, while others, as soon as they are launched, thrive, strengthen, and, to use a homely phrase, become blessings to their parents. In this latter category may be classed a novelty introduced by Messrs. Henkins, of No. 4, Oxford-street, called "Metallikon," a French inseparable metallic crystal, manipulated by them into most beautiful, useful, and ornamental articles of domestic and architectural use. Of the former, the banner, standard, hand and window screens, of endless variety, are simply charming—the window screens in particular, for beauty of colouring and artistic design, certainly putting stained glass in the background. Then we have bird cages, table mats, flower boxes—for in or out doors—work boxes, &c., all extremely pretty, and exhibiting great taste. We must not forget to mention the very beautiful transparencies, really works of art; and we should think they will soon be in nearly every household where true art is appreciated.

Messrs. Henkins have also introduced some very chaste vases of a combination of crystal and gold, a mixture hitherto baffling the inventor. These vases are exquisite, and, although of fragile appearance, will withstand a fall—a great point in their favour when the proverbial carelessness of servants is taken into consideration. We have no hesitation in asserting that Metallikon will be a great and deserved success.

The Egotist's Note-book.

"TOO many cooks spoil the broth." More than a dozen of her Majesty's ships have, through the "meddling and muddling" of the dockyard authorities, had a narrow escape from finding their level at the bottom of the sea. It happened during the *Vanguard* inquiry to be incidentally stated that ventilating holes had been cut in two of the water-tight bulkheads of the vessel, for the purpose of ventilating the coal-bunkers. The Admiralty, amazed at such imprudence, telegraphed to Devonport to know by whose authority the holes had been cut. The chief constructor knew nothing about the matter, although it was strictly within his province; the controller knew nothing about it; and at length it came out that the work had been done by order of the chief engineer and his assistant, in compliance with instructions from the Admiralty that the coal-bunkers must be ventilated to prevent explosions similar to one that had occurred on board the *Devastation*. "My Lords," finding that they themselves were not free from blame, contented themselves with an expression of dissatisfaction with the proceedings of the chief engineer and his assistant, and with giving orders to have the "error" rectified in the case of the *Achilles*, the *Simoom*, the *Himalaya*, the *Swiftsure*, and about a

dozen other vessels, which have lately been sailing about with big holes cut in their water-tight bulkheads below the water-line!

How often it happens that we can do for others what we can't do for ourselves! Poor Henry Phillips, the famous baritone-bass singer, who died at Dalston on the 3rd ult., saved Weber's masterpiece, *Der Freischütz*, from condemnation when it was originally produced; but, although he took the leading part himself, he was unable to secure the success of his own operetta, *The Harvest Queen*, which was brought out at Drury Lane in 1838. The best days of Phillips carry us back to the time of Braham, Madame Vestris, Malibran, Grisi, Pasta, and other artistic celebrities whose names now live only in our memories. It is somewhat singular that Tamburini, the great Italian baritone-bass, should have died on the same day as poor Phillips.

England isn't afraid of showing her strength. Notwithstanding the possibility of a war with Russia, a party of Russian officers of high rank have, within the past few days, been permitted to visit Portsmouth Dockyard, where they have been wandering about at their own sweet will, taking notes of anything and everything they pleased. As a proof of their quicksightedness, it may be mentioned that whilst they were going over the *Boadicea* they requested to be shown the new torpedo carriage. The attendant thought it had not yet been fitted; but the Russian officers assured him that he was mistaken, and at once led the way to the part of the vessel where it was to be found.

The late Cardinal Antonelli beat the famous Cocker at arithmetic. Monsignor Patterson ridiculed the idea of the Cardinal having amassed a fortune, seeing that his official salary was only £800 per annum. The Cardinal's will, however, has been found, and it appears that he died worth about £800,000. Where did he get it from?

It's the early bird that catches the worm, although when the early bird is a man, the worm is not always so palatable as might be desired. A man was recently taken to one of the London hospitals, having lost the use of his upper extremities, and his voice being reduced to the merest whisper. He was a cab-washer, and usually finished his work just as the public-houses were opening in the morning. It was a matter of boasting with him that he always had the very first glass of beer or gin that was served; and, as this liquor had been in contact with the lead in the drawpipe all night, he imbibed lead enough, in the course of his drinkings, to bring him to the condition described. The physicians have cured him, and in future he'll leave the boasting to somebody else.

Mr. George Otto Trevelyan denounced the continued maintenance of the honorary colonelcies as a "horrid scandal." The political economists are just now engaged upon another scandal in connection with this subject. Lord Templetown has been appointed to the command of the 2nd Life Guards;

and although his qualifications are not disputed, it is asked, with some force, why the colonelcies—each worth £1,800 a year—of the three household cavalry regiments should be confined to peers. The reason generally assigned is that the office of Gold Stick is associated with each of the colonelcies; and consequently the holder has, on certain State occasions, to receive his orders personally from the sovereign. But would it be more derogatory to Her Majesty to give her orders to Sir Garnet Wolseley than to my Lord Tomnoddy? Besides, the money is voted by the House of Commons not for Court but for army services; and it is unjust to rob untitled but gallant veterans of the few prizes of the profession, for the sake of pandering to aristocratic prejudices.

Here are a few of the latest specimens from the "agony" column of the *Times*.—

"Utterly deny anything that may be said. Don't advertise. Address, &c.—Signed, REVENGE."

This is good, sound, pugilistic advice; and, if followed, won't commit the young lady or gentleman to anything. But what are we to say of this?—

"Mrs. T. was in hopes to have seen Mrs. M. Jones this autumn in England. Trusts she is quite well. Will be very pleased to receive a letter from Mrs. Jones."

Where was the necessity of advertising this in the newspapers? Didn't Mrs. T. know Mrs. Jones's address? A note addressed to "Mrs. M. Jones, England," *might* have found her. Here's another chance for the Post-office:—

"Will the nephew of Sir Bartle Frere, who was last July in Pretorius Kop, Africa, shooting with Mr. Fox, at once send his address to Mrs. Fox, Donington, Spalding?"

Some intelligent Pretorius Kopite will probably carry a copy of the *Times* containing this announcement into the jungle, where it will be thankfully received by the adventurous sportsmen! This is the last:—

"S. P.—Letters directed to place of business should be marked 'Private'."

Certainly, if they're love letters; and the young lady will, no doubt, be careful in future.

In a case heard at the Marlborough-street police-court, it was stated that butter adulterated to the extent of 75 or 80 per cent. is technically termed "bosh" by the trade. For selling this vile compound at the rate of 14d. a lb., a tradesman was condemned to pay £5 and costs. He discovered that there was no "bosh" about that!

A subscription is being raised for the benefit of Mrs. Henry Kingsley, who, by the long illness and death of her husband, has been left widowed and in straitened circumstances. Mr. Henry Kingsley played, in his time, no mean part in lending gratification to the readers of fiction; some of his works will live, and deservedly. Pending the time when

Government wakes up to the fact that Mrs. Henry Kingsley merits the literary pension, well-wishers may call to mind this subscription.

Mr. William Tinsley announces a new novel—"Her Father's Name. By Florence Marryat, Author of 'Fighting the Air,' 'Her Lord and Master,'"

It was a work of supererogation to say this—"Her Father's Name"—for of course it is, Captain Marryat's daughter being Mrs. Ross Church.

An amusing remark was made at the Opéra Comique the other night, when the audience were getting very impatient for the appearance of Madame Celine Chaumont, in the *petite comédie*, "*Madame attend Monsieur*," for, as one of the audience observed, it was a case of transposal, as Monsieur was waiting for Madame.

A very graceful and refined addition has, I see, been made to the pages of the *Whitehall Review*, in the shape of a series of cartoons of the leaders of society. These handsome lithographs are in the first style of art, and well deserve a place in either folio or frame. So far, the "leaders" who have appeared are the Queen, the Princess of Wales, the Princess Beatrice, and the Duchess of Westminster.

INTERESTING DISCOVERY IN ROME.—An interesting discovery has just been made at Rome, in the church of St. Peter ad Vincula. Workmen have been engaged for some time in the construction of a "confession" near the high altar. In the course of the excavations, in a line between the altar and the apse, they came upon a marble sarcophagus more than two metres in length. On the sides are sculptured five groups, in the style, apparently, of the fourth or fifth century. The first represents the Redeemer raising Lazarus, with the sister of the latter on her knees at the tomb; the second, the multiplication of the loaves and fishes; the third, Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well; the fourth, our Lord foretelling to Peter his triple denial; and the fifth, Christ giving the keys to Peter. The interior is divided into seven compartments, and this circumstance has given rise to the belief that the sarcophagus found contains the bodies of the seven Maccabees, which, according to church history and tradition, rest in this church, built by Eudoxia.

Now that winter has come, and ladies are looking forward to many a pleasant evening spent in the enjoyment of the dance, they often forget the attendant fatigue, until the exhaustion of the following day reminds them that every pleasure has its alloy. This fatigue is in great measure produced by the tight ligature or garter with which the stockings are fastened, hindering the free circulation of the blood. Medical men are unanimous in declaring the use of garters to be a most fruitful source of disease. Every lady desiring health and comfort should at once provide herself with a pair of the new patent stocking suspenders, made by Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London. The price is only 3s. per pair, of any draper, or post free for two extra stamps.

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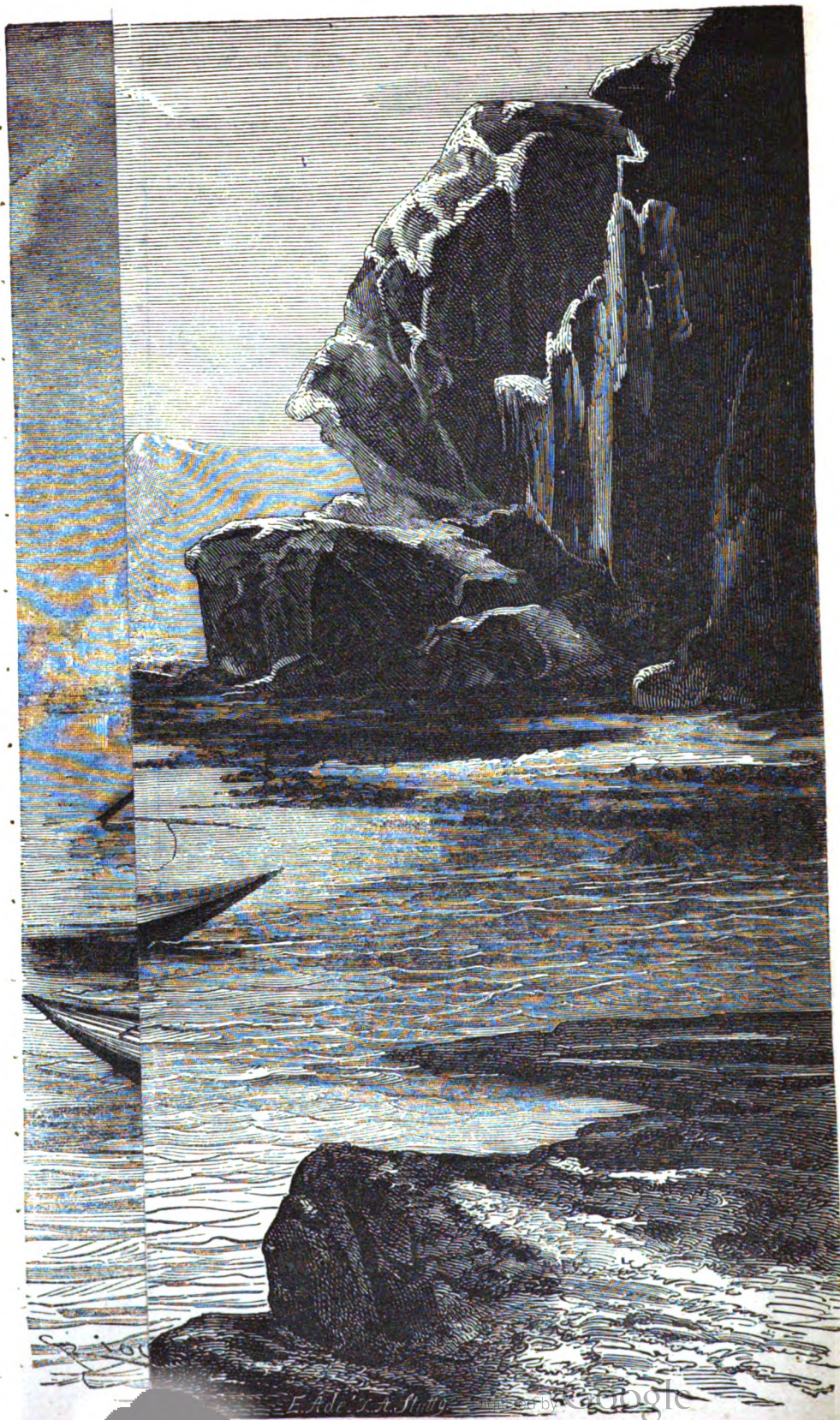
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Three Hundred Virgins.

A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS.

CHAPTER VIII.—THE DECLARATION.

DEBORAH BURROWS, spinster, had come so suddenly upon the doctor, and his thoughts had been of such a peculiar nature, that he started back, half confused, and the woman stood smiling meaningly at him.

"I don't think you will be monarch of all you survey, Mr. Doctor Helston," she said at last.

"I have no wish to be, Mrs. Burrows," said the young man, quietly. "I was only quoting the words of the old poem about Alexander Selkirk."

"And a good thing for you, young man," said the lady. "Now, look here, sir—I am a woman of few words, and I tell you at once what decision we have come to."

"May I ask whom you mean by *we*?" said Helston, quietly.

"The three hundred women who have been so basely deserted by the men who had charge of them, and were to have taken them in safety to their destination."

"I see no use in arguing with you, Mrs. Burrows," said Helston, coldly. "As to desertion, the captain lost his life for you, one mate lies seriously injured in your service, and I believe the other was swept away. He was not a man to desert you; and I, your doctor, am here."

"I say," exclaimed Deborah, sharply, "that we were cruelly deserted."

And she accompanied her words with a stamp of the foot.

"As you will, madam," said Helston, quietly; "and now I have my patient to see to."

"Stop here, and listen to me, young man; and bear in mind, if you please, that you are our doctor—and servant."

"Indeed?" said Helston.

"Yes, you may sneer; but we have determined now to act for ourselves. Behave yourself orderly, and you will be very little interfered with; but interfere, sir, in any way—take upon yourself to contradict, to give orders, or to act as you acted a short time back, and you will find this place too hot to hold you."

"My good woman," said Helston, who was beginning to lose his temper, "I have no time to listen to your nonsense."

"Nonsense!" half shrieked Deborah. "Mind this, sir—I am master and leader here, and I shall be obeyed. You will keep to your duties, and act when required; but I will be minded. Recollect, please, there are three hundred women here, all sworn to go with me, and you are perfectly helpless. I may be a woman, but I will show you that I am a woman of decision."

"Then what do you mean to do?" said Helston, laughing contemptuously—"establish a female republic, with the banner of woman's rights floating above your head?"

"Sneer away, fool!" said the woman, viciously. "I shall have to show you that I have ways of dealing with such as you."

"Perhaps it would be as well, Mrs. Burrows, for you to recollect," said Helston, "that I am a medical man, and that I have had considerable experience in the management of mad women."

"Mad women!" cried Deborah, half beside herself with rage.

"Yes," said Helston, quietly, "I was four years helping in an insane ward."

Deborah set her teeth, and her hands clenched.

"Don't you try to resist me," she exclaimed, through her set teeth, "or it will be the worse for you. I tell you, I am master here, and will be obeyed. Do you think I am to be put down now by a stripling sent out, as you have been, to the disgrace of the shipowners, who ought to have sent a proper doctor? Ah, I'll be even with him yet."

These last words were uttered as Helston walked sharply past her, and down into the cabin, where Laurent lay, with his eyes half closed, furtively watching the two girls, who were busily putting the place in order.

"Ah, doctor!" he said, feebly. "Come and tell me all about how we are situated. I have hardly got a word from my kind nurses."

"First of all," said Helston, smiling, "let's see whether you can bear it."

And he felt his patient's pulse, ending by telling him how they were placed.

"I can form no idea of where we are," said Laurent. "We must have been driven a long way out of our course. Pray, set me on my legs again, doctor, and let me see to matters."

"There seems to be no need," said Helston, smiling.

"What do you mean?"

"Only that Deborah Burrows has proclaimed a republic, seized the ship, impressed the crew, as represented by 'Thello, the black cook; and as soon as you are well, I suppose you will be a prisoner."

"Don't make fun of it, please, Mr. Helston," said Mary Dance; "it's quite dreadful. She was hatching this up all the time we were shut below during the storm; and because Miss Monroe and I held back, she persecuted us shamefully."

"Well, never mind, my dear Miss Dance," said Helston, smiling. "If this proves to be our home, we four will set up an independent state, and receive all the seceders, who will be many. Take care of your patient, who is to talk no more."

And he left the cabin, with a look at Grace Monroe which brought the blood into her pale cheeks.

CHAPTER IX.—FUNERAL.

ON going forward amongst the busy women, Helston saw 'Thello make a dash to get at him, but he was prevented.

"About poor Mrs. Kent," said Helston to one of the women. "When did she die?"

"We found her dead in her cot this morning, sir," said the woman, respectfully.

"Steps must be taken at once," said Helston. "She must be got ashore, and buried this afternoon."

"Will you have the goodness to interfere, young man, when you are called upon," said Deborah, who

had overheard his words, "and with what concerns you?"

"This concerns me, madam," said Helston, sharply. "It has to do with the health of those in my charge. This climate is intensely hot."

"Mrs. Kent will be buried as at sea," said Deborah—"this afternoon."

"Certainly not," said Helston, firmly; "I protest against it."

"You protest! And why?" exclaimed the woman, fiercely.

"Firstly, because we are not in deep water. Secondly, look there!"

He took her by the arm, and half thrust her to the side, where, through an opening in the torn bulwarks, he threw out a heavy block that had fallen from the rigging, and it dropped into the limpid water with a heavy splash.

In an instant the water seemed to be alive, for at least a dozen sharks darted for the spot, plunging rapidly about, till, finding no work for their eager teeth, they poised themselves a few feet below the surface, and lay patiently watching for prey.

"The lagoon is alive with these monsters, attracted by the wreck, and the bodies of the men who so basely forsook you," said Helston, quietly. "Now, had we not better see about making a raft upon which we can get ashore?"

Deborah shuddered; but recovered herself at once.

"Yes," she said, sharply, "we will have one made, and get ashore."

"And don't say a word about what you have seen," said Helston, maliciously, "or not one of your strong-minded women will venture upon the raft when it is made."

Deborah looked daggers at him; but she saw the force of the argument, and no mention of the sharks was made.

It was no slight task, this making of a raft that would bear half a dozen people in safety to the shore; but Helston set to with a will, after partaking of the ample meal 'Thello had provided, and badly it was wanted. With the black's help, some spare spars were cut loose from their lashings, tools were obtained from the carpenter's locker, and by spiking and lashing a strong framework was made, on which hatches were nailed across and across, while openings were left ready for sinking in a couple of large water casks, and securing them, to give buoyancy to the structure as soon as it was launched.

By evening this was successfully done, the raft, secured by a rope, being, by the force of many willing hands, thrust over the side, to fall with a mighty splash. Then the casks were fastened in their places by Helston and the black, and a good, buoyant raft lay ready.

"Now," said Helston, good-humouredly, as he stood ready with an oar in his hand, "shall we two act as pioneers, or is it to be women's work?"

"I'll go," said Deborah, and she descended boldly, to stand beside them, taking an oar in hand; and they pushed off, to find landing very easy, and at the end of an hour a shallow grave was dug in the sand, and they returned to the ship.

The sun was ready to dip beneath the crimson

wave as, with their solemn burden, the raft once more grounded on the sand. Then as it sank, the body was laid in its last resting-place, and covered with the sun-dried sand. A few short prayers had been said, and across the smooth water of the lagoon the side of the ship was white with faces, from which floated a low, hushed murmur.

Then, without a word, the funeral party once more embarked, and, with darkness rapidly falling, the great mellow stars coming out one by one overhead, and the foam that had been like silver all day, now golden with the same wondrous phosphorescence that made the water splash like lambent waves of fire as they dipped their oars, the raft once more was pushed off for the ship.

Not a word was spoken; but Deborah Burrows sat gazing keenly from side to side, as ever and again, disturbed by the dipping oars, some fish darted away, leaving a line of fire low down beneath them, till they reached the ship, climbed on board, and, after the raft had been secured, sat wearily down, saddened and silent with the duty they had performed, and wondering at the magnificence of the stars that burned above.

CHAPTER X.—EXPLORATION.

A QUIET night had been passed, many of the shipwrecked party spending it upon the open deck, so soft and balmy was the air. Save for a strange, dull murmur or two, which seemed to come from the woods ashore, not a sound broke the stillness of the glorious night, and all slept heavily the deep sleep of those who had for nights been tossing in a wild sea, momentarily expecting the end.

With the morning the first toil of a busy day began. Helston went to his patient, and found him cooler, and evidently progressing well. Then, on passing to the deck, he found 'Thello already busily at work, and Deborah Burrows giving orders.

The young doctor was about to go up to her; but, on second thoughts, it seemed to him that the most sensible plan would be to let her have her own way, and only to come into collision with her when she interfered, or in any way showed herself obnoxious to those whom he took upon himself to protect.

"The first thing should be to explore the place," said Helston, "and that shall be my task. I think you will bear leaving very well for a few hours," he said, going to Laurent's cot.

"Oh, yes; I shall be up in a day or two," was the reply. "Where are you going?"

"Ashore, to see what the place is like,"

"Alone, Mr. Helston?" said Grace Monroe, starting.

"Well—yes; unless you will walk with me," said Helston, smiling.

And the girl coloured and shrank back, ashamed of the anxiety she had evinced.

"Grace Monroe and I had been talking about the place," said Mary Dance, coming to the rescue; "and we were wondering whether there were any wild beasts. It would be so awkward if they ate the doctor," she added, drily.

"I'm glad you both take such interest in me," he said, laughing. "But I don't think there is any fear. You must take care of your patient."

"But the ship, doctor," said Laurent, earnestly, "is there any danger of her breaking up?"

"I should say not, for years," replied Helston. "She is grounded in shallow water, and is evidently settling down in the sand, so that in a day or two she will be nearly upon an even keel. The bank outside will be protection enough. But, there, I can't stop talking."

He went to his cabin, took a double fowling-piece, a revolver and plenty of ammunition, a long sheath knife, and a hatchet. In addition he carried a flask, and some biscuits and preserved meat, and, slung over his shoulder, a light telescope, presenting, when ready, a formidable object to the women, who were about descending to the raft.

"And where are you going, doctor?" said Deborah Burrows, coming forward as he moved towards the gangway, where the raft was moored.

"Ashore, to examine the place," said Helston, quietly.

"And by whose authority?" exclaimed Deborah, sharply. "I intend exploring the place with a party this afternoon."

"I 'fraid you spoil your lubbly complexion, ma'am," said 'Thello. "Hy-yah, hy-yah! de sun berry hot dis fine wedder, ma'am. Better let de mass' doctor go."

"Hold your tongue, you black scoundrel!" exclaimed Deborah. And then, as Helston went on still towards the raft, "You heard what I said, sir?"

"Yes," said Helston, "I heard what you said," and he quietly lowered himself down to where two of the women were already standing.

"Lee, Smith, stop that man," said Deborah. "If he will not mind, he must be taught."

She ran to the gangway, closely followed by half a dozen more women, half in earnest, half laughing, for they did not take the mover 'nt, in spite of her lessons, in quite the same light. Deborah Burrows; for, out of danger, and in that lovely climate, to some the affair seemed to begin to wear the aspect of some novel picnic that would be at an end before many days were past.

Before Deborah reached the gangway, though, Helston was on the raft, and the sudden descent of the armed figure of the young doctor was sufficient to make the two sturdy girls, Lee and Smith, shriek, and scramble up the swinging wooden steps to the deck, leaving Helston at liberty to cast off the rope, give the raft a thrust, and send it sailing gently away from the ship.

"Come back, or I'll fire on you," cried Deborah, fiercely.

But at that moment there was a roar of laughter; for, with a whoop and a yell, 'Thello broke from among those with whom he was at work, washing potatoes, ran across the deck, gave a tremendous leap, turned a summersault in the air, and came down with a mighty splash in the water.

Helston looked at the agitated lagoon in horror, and levelled his gun ready to fire at the first shark that appeared; but 'Thello was on the surface again in a moment, struck out rapidly for the raft, and climbed upon it in safety.

"Hy-yah, hy-yah!" he laughed. "Look at de shark. But dey no hab niggah, sah—him too black."

"For Heaven's sake, don't venture upon such a risk again!" cried Helston.

"Hy-yah, hy-yah! Mass' doctor, dey tink me noder kind of shark when I show 'em de teeth. Hy-yah! Good-bye, ladies; I not coming back yet awhile. You wash de tater yourselves; and you, Ma'am Burrows, you may frow 'em all ober de ship, dis chile going out wid massa doctor for de day."

Deborah gave one stamp of her foot in impotent rage as 'Thello seized an oar, and the raft was propelled pretty quickly towards the shore, drawn up so as to be safe from floating away, and then the two explorers turned to go upon their expedition.

Helston gazed thoughtfully first, though, towards the ship; for it had flashed across his mind that Deborah might endeavour to revenge herself upon the two girls in the cabin for this evasion.

"But it must be done," he said, half aloud, "and I may not be allowed another chance. Heavens! how can people be so absurd?"

"'Pose I carry der biscuit and de chopper and knife and spy-glass, mass' doctor," said 'Thello; "dat make him lighter for you."

"Yes; and sling the flask over your shoulder, too, 'Thello," said Helston.

"What in him flask, mass' doctor?" said 'Thello. "Physic?"

"No, 'Thello," said Helston, smiling—"brandy."

"Den mass' doctor carry flask himself, sah; for dis niggah death on grog."

"Pooh, 'Thello; surely you can carry that for me?"

"I no like to try, sah, less the top 'crewed on berry tight, so I can't get at um. When I carry grog bottle, um allus seem to laugh inside, and go dinkum, dinkum, till I 'bliged to pull de cork out and smell um, and den I taste, an' him all ober wid me."

"Come, then, I'll watch you, 'Thello," said Helston; "for we must have a drop with us, in case of a breakdown."

"Den mass' doctor not bully dis chile if de liquor go?"

"I'll trust you, 'Thello; so come along," said Helston. "I'd have brought two guns if I had known."

"Nebbah mind, sah; only you wait while dis chile cut himself a big 'tick here, and den we go on."

By means of the hatchet, 'Thello soon laid a sturdy sapling on the ground, and cut himself from it a fine fat staff, which was likely to prove a formidable weapon in case of danger; and then they stepped out, leaving the shore, and trying to make direct for the mountain, which Helston hoped to surmount before his return.

It was hot, but there was a soft breeze beneath the waving cocoa palms, as they went on through a thick wood, where the undergrowth was sufficiently open, though, to allow of easy passage. Of fruit there seemed to be a fair quantity; and bright-plumaged parrots fitted before them, uttering their wild cries, and then flying round and round as if anxious to see the aim of their visit to these wilds.

So far, with the exception of a few lizards, and a small snake or two, nothing had been seen that bore the semblance of dangerous, though here and there dense, dank, jungly dells were passed that would

have afforded plenty of cover for the most dangerous of beasts. But the principal aims of Helston's expedition were to ascertain whether there were inhabitants, and whether this were an island or part of some continent.

Soon they came to open, park-like tracts of land, with bushes scattered about, lush with blossoms, and musical with insects. So beautiful were some of these pieces, that it seemed quite natural to expect a handsome mansion to peer out from amidst the patches of grove, or sheltering clusters of tall trees.

But, no; save for the cries of birds, all was still, and apparently theirs were the first feet that had pressed the rich green carpet over which they trod.

As they advanced the ground became more broken. They crossed little valleys, some of them quite deep gorges, down which, out of sight, amidst a wonderful greenery of ferns and mosses, trickled musical waters, whose birthplace was evidently the mountain of whose summit they kept catching glimpses through the trees.

The beauty of some of the little ravines was wondrous, the explorers making their way over moss-covered heaps of lava, amongst which the clear waters trickled—here forming beautiful basins, overhung with ferns there, and a little farther on leaping down in miniature cascades, whose waters seemed of green and silver, so beautiful was the twilight in which they moved; for, save where here and there bright golden shafts of sunlight darted through, the ravines were ceiled with a green network of ferns and climbing plants, which thrust out great trumpet or bell-shaped blossoms, to court the notice of wandering beetles as they flitted by.

"I tink, sah, we come to berry nice place, arpter all," said 'Thello, suddenly. "Only all dem women will soon spoil um, with dat great buffler she-horse to lead 'em. Dis way, sah. I—golly, look dah!"

As he spoke, he gave a sharp cut at something which was gliding softly over a prostrate cocoa palm in front.

In an instant, the serpent—for such it was—that with one keen cut he had divided, writhed and darted about in the most furious way, the head portion in one direction, the tail in the other; and so furiously did both parts twine and lash about, that, though placed beyond power of offence, had the travellers been within reach and caught by the folds, death would probably have followed.

This was a startling episode, for the serpent was sixteen or seventeen feet long, and moderately thick; but there was greater danger to come. Scarcely had the violent writhings of the boa subsided, and the dis severed halves disappeared amongst the long, green undergrowth, than a low, dull hiss from a few yards' distance was succeeded by a rustling noise. The smaller ferns were seen to vibrate, and, before Helston and the black had time to think of fleeing, a second serpent glided into view; and then, seeing the two men, in place of beating a retreat, curled itself up, and raised its head in a menacing way, its eyes glistening, and its forked tongue playing about its parted mouth, as it uttered a low hiss.

"Golly, mass' doctor, why don't yer run?" whispered 'Thello. "Look out, sah, um going to make a spring."

As he spoke, 'Thello placed himself behind a tree; but, to his horror, Helston stood perfectly still, as if paralyzed with horror, and the black ran out once more.

As he did so, raising his cudgel the while, the serpent darted, turning itself into a living lasso, and Helston's fate seemed sealed; but, with a hoarse cry, 'Thello struck with all his might at the yellowy-green mottled reptile, his staff catching it full, with such violence that its aim was spoiled, and it fell twisting and writhing in agony, bruised if not broken; and a charge of shot from Helston's gun completed the work.

"That was a narrow escape, 'Thello," said Helston, shuddering, as they walked on, the latter recharging his gun the while.

"Golly, sah, I like to see Ma'am Burrows meet dem serpums; she frighten um into fits."

"I hope there are not many such reptiles here, 'Thello," said Helston in reply, "or the Paradise will be haunted indeed."

"Nebbah mind, sah," said 'Thello, showing his white teeth—"plenty Eve—plenty serpum; but I nebba see single apple dree all froo de place."

At the end of an hour they were well on the rising ground; and as they progressed, the ferns and palms grew fewer, the gorges deeper and more rocky, the stones being of that dull grey red or blackened grey which told of volcanic formation, and every step now showed more plainly that they were ascending the side of some great volcano; but the lava and cinders had been gradually weathered, the warm, humid moisture of the clime had made vegetation thrive, and everywhere there was some rich green growth to hide what had probably been a scene of scorched desolation.

"Big country dis here, sah," said the perspiring black, as they halted upon the steep ascent.

"I'm afraid not, 'Thello," said Helston; "but keep on, man—another hour, and we shall be on the top."

"I keep on, sah, till you tell me to stop," said 'Thello, grinning.

And he tramped forward, with the result that in less than an hour they had climbed the last and steepest slope, to stand looking down into the deep crater of the mountain, a hollow of a cone form, quite a thousand feet deep, and a mile or so round, its northern edge being lower than the southern, upon which they stood.

But it was no horrible scene of scorched rock and lava, for the interior was of the most vivid green. Flowers abounded, and save in one spot, where a faint blue thread of smoke arose in spirals, like the fire from some gipsy encampment, the place seemed a perfect Eden.

That tiny thread showed, though, that the fires which had raised the island were not extinct. For island it was—a volcanic cone thrown up in the midst of the sea, vomiting forth lava, ashes, and huge stones, to crumble down, in the course of ages, and become soil fit for the growth of seeds drifted to it by the restless tides; and summer had succeeded summer, with growth and fruition, till the place was the smiling paradise before them.

Helston stood on the highest point, sweeping the

shore of the land, to see that it was nearly circular, save where here and there it ran out like a buttress into the sea, forming point and bay; and then, sweep the horizon as he would, in every direction there was nothing but the eternal sea.

As far as he could judge, the island was about twenty miles round, and they were the only inhabitants.

They sat down, and had a good rest, as they partook of the simple refreshments they had brought with them, 'Thello seeming perfectly happy afterwards in the enjoyment of a very dirty black pipe; and then, descending by another ravine, one of the many that scored the mountain to the summit, they reached the shore about a mile from the ship, walked along the firm, yellow sands, and reached the raft just at sundown, the softly heaving waters of the lagoon being dyed of a rich orange as they rowed across to the ship, where, in spite of Deborah Burrows's authority, they were immediately surrounded with a host of inquirers, eager to learn what the place was like.

The Man in the Open Air.

THE THAMES TILT BOAT.

FEW who have enjoyed a run up the Thames on the tidal stream but must have seen these tilt boats. They are so termed from their arched covering, and are more particularly to be observed as we pass by Chiswick and Strand-on-the-Green, if not in use, either indolently at anchor under the osier eyots, or lying high and dry on the shore. Sometimes, a little family will peep forth, as the steamer passes, like a group of gipsies from one of these aquatic tents, which, during the summer months, often serve the fishermen to whom the boats belong for parlour, bed-room, kitchen, and all.

The employment of these fishermen is catching eels, flounders, smelts, and other fish. For this purpose they used to go down formerly as low as the mouth of the Thames, or as high as Richmond, above which netting is illegal, although not long since it was permitted as high as Teddington—this district, from Richmond to Teddington, having been taken from the apprenticed and licenced fishermen under promises of greater benefits, which were never fulfilled.

The Thames fishermen's calling, indeed, has lamentably fallen off at both ends of the river. The long talk of the entire removal of the sewage from the stream gave hopes of the revival of this industry; but the concentration of the outfalls at Crossness and Barking sealed the fate of the fishing grounds from thence downwards, as did the operations of the angling society in the tidal flow up country. Where once, in the memory of young men, shad, plaice, whiting, codling, and brill were prolific on the miles of clean gravelly bottom in the lower Thames, now there is nothing but mud, as deep as it can be to sustain its altitude against the force of the channel.

The fishermen of the Thames are a guild. They are regularly apprenticed, pay heavy fees, are under laws and regulations of a very stringent nature to

use only certain kinds of nets, in certain places, and only at certain times of the year. They numbered about two thousand in all; but these numbers must be greatly on the decrease, as it is now the poorest of pursuits, and the occurrence of an apprenticeship, unless it is attached to that of a boatman, is scarcely known.

The only fish now left to these men, in exceedingly diminished numbers, are flounders (or fluke), dabs, roach and dace occasionally, a few smelts and lamperns, and a stray barbel, perch, trout, &c.

The dab is seldom taken above the brackish water. It is an excellent fish, and when in perfection, which is in the early spring, has a very delicate flavour. The dab is very frequently confounded with the flounder or fluke, as the latter is of a similar size and shape, but much inferior in quality. It may be easily distinguished therefrom, as the dab is rough on the back, and nearly transparent, whilst the flounder is smooth and opaque. The dab is a very prettily marked fish when first taken out of the water, being of a delicate brown hue on the back, mottled with crescent-shaped spots of a bright orange; but these hues fade in death, and the spots become nearly invisible, so that the fish soon lose their attractive appearance. They are from ten to fifteen inches in length, and eight to twelve inches in breadth, and we have known one man, single-handed, take from three to four, or even five, dozen in a tide, when they were abundant. To eat them in perfection is to refect on board the boat itself, or when yachting to lie alongside and purchase a few, while leaping alive, from the fishermen. They are particularly good when fried, either with or without bread crumbs. But if you have more than you know how to dispose of fresh, cut off the heads and that portion of the belly which covers the intestines, sprinkle them thickly with salt, and lay them an hour or two in a pan to allow it to penetrate; then hang them up on a line or drying frame, well out of the reach of cats, or on a "rive"—a fish stick—taking care that they do not touch each other; they will then keep a fortnight or more after being dried.

The flounder or fluke frequents tidal waters, and, although evidently a sea fish, will wander far into perfectly fresh water, and there live and thrive. Indeed, we find them in the Thames as high as Richmond; and the brood this season, individually not larger than a silver penny at present, literally colours and covers the bottom of the Thames at low water at Barnes and Chiswick. This brood suffers considerably from the effects of heavy rainfalls after a long drought, as such sudden inundations flush the neighbouring sewers, and the flounder fry turn up dead in hundreds of thousands. This is always a sad spectacle for the tilt boat fishermen, who therein see the destruction of the hopes of a profitable future season. Visitations of this nature have occurred twice within the last three years, when the nets of the fishermen were covered, when brought in, with dead flounders, from the size of a lentil to that of a franc piece, adhering to the mesh.

The flounder is very similar in shape to the dab, but softer in flesh. However, in the winter, and until the beginning of spring, it is tolerably firm; and being at this season full of spawn, will be found very

palatable if broiled over a clear fire, or nicely fried. In cooking most flat fish by either broiling or frying, remove the roes and dress them alone, as they are rarely sufficiently done if left in the fish. In choosing the flounder, the fishermen tell us they should be stiff and thick, their eyes bright and full, and be dressed at once. Their season is from January to March, and from July to September. The flounder makes an excellent water *soucky*, which some epicures prefer to perch for that purpose. They are stewed with parsley leaves and roots, a few peppercorns, and a quart of water, till the flounders fall to pieces; then pulp through a sieve, and then again put into the stewpan with the liquor they were boiled in, some fresh leaves and roots of parsley, and allow to simmer until the parsley is done. Serve with slices of bread and butter. Some add white wine, vinegar, and salt; but it is better to let your guest flavour to taste.

But perhaps the taking of eels is the most staple avocation of these men. These they catch in the baskets you see, when not in use, piled up in their boats. The eel-pot, or basket, is a peculiar contrivance for this purpose, and is generally made by the fishermen themselves, or for them by an old veteran named John Odell, at Chiswick, who ekes out a living by alternately fishing and eel-pot making. They are formed of willow rods, and have a trap-like contrivance to secure the eel after, it has entered, attracted by the bait of worms or other food. These eels are seldom now above six to the pound, but are full of flavour. As the tide of humanity in favour of the dumb and brute creation is at present most mercifully on the rise, we cannot do better than tell our readers that the best way to put an eel out of its troubles is to strike it with a mallet upon the tail, which immediately kills it. It may then be easily skinned, if necessary, without those contortions and writhings which, whether "eels are used to it" or not, we should hope our tender-hearted sisters will never be desirous to perpetuate in practice.

Francatelli, Soyer, Gunter, and others, have said that it spoiled an eel to submit it to this torture; and if we may judge by the effect a lingering death has upon most animals—calves not excepted—the flesh is much deteriorated by the process. These views confirm the accepted notion amongst civilized beings that no amount of cruelty, however exquisitely applied, can contribute to the animal or mental gratification of man. Dr. Alfred Haviland, moreover, tells us that disease sets in with the dominion of pain; and, with this rational fact before us, we may rest assured that we do not go physically scot-free in inflicting undue misery upon others. A little salt placed in the mouth of an eel will produce instant death, or throwing it on the floor with violence will have the same effect.

The Thames silver eel under notice is generally esteemed the best, and the worst are bought of the Dutch and sold at Billingsgate; indeed, perhaps there is a greater difference in the quality of eels than in any other fish. At many of the riverside public-houses a real Thames eel is not to be obtained, although you may be assured that "they came up and out of the Thames" (yes, from Holland, in submerged trunks).

The greatest luxury, however, which the tidal way at present produces is the smelt, which comes up the Thames in more or less (we are sorry to say, of late years, very less) numbers, between the months of August and May. Their favourite spawning ground used to be, and still, with diminished numbers, is, between the Suspension Bridge at Hammersmith and Chiswick Eyot.

As these months interfere in part with the restrictions placed against netting for other fish, a special permission to fish for smelts has to be obtained from the Thames Conservancy Board, and fortunate are those who, when a few smelts are taken, can obtain the privilege of purchase. They are certainly a very fine fish; the goodness as well as the freshness of its condition may be detected by a bright silvery appearance, the redness of its gills, and the brightness of its eyes. It is very fragile, and will not keep long; thus, if a dull cast prevails, the eyes look sunk, the body flabby, and the abdomen discoloured, it is stale and unfit to be eaten. Although too often used as a mere garnish for other fish, the river smelt, when properly cooked and served very hot, is a dish for an emperor.

Roach, dace, and barbel now and then fall in shoals to the capture of the tilt boat fishermen; not so lampreys, but lamperns, which fish are distinct from the eel, and equally so in many respects from each other. Lampreys are in our river from the middle of April to May; but, as it has become an extremely rare fish in the Thames, we are saved from stating more respecting it.

The lampern, however, still comes up into the fresh water in comparative large quantities to spawn, and they generally select the old piers of bridges and weirs for such purpose. Teddington is a favourite place for them, and so was the old wooden ramshackle, Hampton Court Bridge. They are a small fish in comparison to the lamprey, and are principally captured to send to Holland as bait for turbot, cod, and other fish—more than usual cargoes of lampreys being received by the Dutch from England with great public rejoicings. Formerly, the Thames supplied as many as 1,000,000 to 1,200,000 lamperns annually; but of late years 400,000 have been considered a good take. They are, moreover, sold occasionally for stewing, baking, potting, frying, and collaring; but we confess to never being capable of eliciting a single attraction from them in all these culinary preparations. They are in best condition for the table from October to March.

Cham, the French Caricaturist.

THE greatest caricaturist in France is the Comte Amadee de Noe, better known as Cham.

He was born in 1819, and of most aristocratic lineage, for his father, the Comte de Noe, was a peer of France. His mother was, however, English; and young Amadee, having been brought up entirely by her, acquired a British accent, which he retains to this day.

Very tall, thin, and upright, scrupulously correct and English in his attire, of manners externally cold and polished, he thoroughly realizes the Parisian

idea of the Londoner; the more so as, like the sailor in Gilbert's ballad, he never laughs and he never smiles, though he is one of the most practical jokers in existence.

On an occasion, going into a restaurant, where he was unknown, he settled into a corner seat which happened to be generally reserved for a stockbroker who dined in the house every evening.

The waiter said nothing; but the stockbroker, coming in, felt wroth at the usurpation, and was about to complain of it, when he recognized the familiar features of the caricaturist.

He thought he would have a joke at the expense of Cham, and, calling the landlord aside, asked him if he knew who was that tall, thin, most solemn stranger.

No; the landlord had never seen him before.

"Ah—well, then, I advise you to order him out as quickly as possible, else he will scare away all your other customers," whispered the stockbroker. "It is Heidenrich, the executioner."

The landlord gave a jump; but without an instant's loss of time walked up to Cham, and begged him to depart, adding that he would not ask him to pay for what he had eaten, and would, indeed, not consent to touch his money at any price.

Cham's features betrayed not the slightest surprise at this communication.

"May I ask who revealed to you that I am the headman?" he said, in his gravest tones.

"It is that gentleman yonder."

"Ah, quite so," answered Cham, imperturbably; "he ought to know me, for I flogged and branded him at Toulon not two years ago."

It is alleged that the stockbroker recorded a vow never to play tricks on Cham again, and similar resolutions are generally made by those who measure with the nimble caricaturist.

A Groan.

UNCHARITABLE grinder,
Nerve-torturer, and handle-winder;
Barrel of spikes with which all martyrs, writing
Are daily bored with airs so uninviting!
Italian iron that enters all our souls in;
Base pipes of war: for peace ne'er dwelt your bow'ls
in.

Worse than a bagpipe drone, or feline yowler;
Worse than a sharpening saw, or Dervish howler!
Hear now my cry—my bitter malediction:
May all your stops go on with endless friction;
May every barrel burst, each tube be frozen;
May rats gnaw all the leather that it goes in;
May all your pipes be stopped, with all such fellows—

Another one's begun— Oh! blow your bellows!

A MAN went through the Bankruptcy Court. He had owned a fine horse and gig, and they both disappeared for a time, but by and by the horse and gig were doing service for the same owner again. On being asked what this meant, the man's reply was, "I went through the Bankruptcy Court, but the horse and gig went around."

Seizing a Spirit.

SOME Rochester newspaper men, says the *Utica Herald*, have been examining "spirit" manifestations in that city.

One of them has entirely convinced himself of the composition of the spirits, and in doing so kicked up a lively row in the circle.

Mr. and Mrs. — are the operators, the latter being the medium. By invitation, representatives of the city papers attended the *séance*, and acted as a committee of examination.

They were inquiring gentlemen, all of them. They examined the cabinet—two sides of which were formed by the walls of the room—with sharp eyes and a hammer. Nothing of false bottom or side could be seen.

They bound the medium with strong cords of thread, put flour in her clenched hands, and tacked the hem of her garments to the floor.

Then was the single kerosene light darkened, and the performance inaugurated.

All went smoothly for a time.

Daniel Webster spoke a piece, during which he reminded John Smith, who was present, that he had met him in the good days of old.

Daniel disappeared, and a woman of the spirit world, name of Lizzie, dressed entirely in white, came out of the cabinet by the partially open door.

She stepped outside, and it is reported that she was of medium height, wore a long veil, and was barefoot.

Only these things had been observed, when some one made a spring for the spirit, and partially gathered it in his arms. This was where the row began.

The spirit slipped out of the mortal's grasp, gave a loud and very feminine shriek, and hustled into the cabinet. Operator hurried to the front, and, remarking that the bold sceptic was a rascal, struck him over the head with a chair. Intense confusion and uproar followed, which were at last quieted by a still, small voice from the cabinet, begging those of the circle to sing, or the medium might die. They sang, and the medium lived.

Those who had bound her found, at the close of the performance, every thread in place, and the face and hands covered with blood. Whence the blood came could not be discovered.

The gentleman who grasped the spirit was W. C. Crum, of the *Express*. He says the form he grasped "was that of a live flesh and blood woman," and he "knows, as well as he knows anything in the world, that it was nothing more or less than a woman that he held in his arms for a brief moment."

For this discovery, the operator was of opinion that he ought to put a bullet through Mr. Crum, but restrained himself.

The affair has greatly excited Rochester, and made Mr. Crum a hero.

AN irritable Yankee, who was disappointed in his boots, threatened to eat up the shoemaker, but finally compromised by drinking a cobbler.

Among the Icebergs.

CHAPTER IV.

AS I still sat thinking, my thoughts seemed to be more and more under my control, and I kept them still to the past, calling up my visits time after time to Mr. Moore, to seek the peace of mind he could not give me. And those were troublesome times, for the loss of the ship proved, indeed, my poor father's ruin. He was old now, and in bad health; and the sum paid by the underwriters was all swallowed up in clearing off old liabilities. And at last, one evening, I sat at the piano, running my hand over the keys, till they seemed to fall of themselves into that old familiar minor air, and I sang, in a low voice, a few lines of "Auld Robin Gray."

My head went down upon my hands, and I wept sore.

For it was my case indeed; and though it was no old lover, but Stephen Ellerby, who came and made those at home look reproachfully at me for my coldness, I felt that the time was fast coming when I must give way, and it seemed that there could be no more hope, no more brightness in life, but all darkness and despair.

I did not start when a step was heard behind me, and when my hand was taken I could not draw it back. It was Stephen Ellerby, I knew, and I knew what he would say; and say it he did: that the old people had given him leave to speak again; that he had waited patiently; that he had always respected my feelings while there was hope that the *Dawn* would return; and now, why should I refuse him, when it would be making him a happy man, and be the means of giving ease and comfort to those who looked to me now for help?

I could not, I would not, give up to him; and I remained firm in spite of all his prayers. I would have died sooner than have yielded then; and three more months glided away—three weary months of waiting, and yet months that seemed to have glided away—and then I was obliged to promise to give up, as a duty to those who gave me birth; for I knew that if I did not consent to become Stephen Ellerby's wife, poverty and wretchedness would fall upon the old folks at home.

I was not breaking faith, I told myself; but it was only to provoke a burst of tears, for I knew that it would be a life of misery, a mockery, to go and swear that I would love a man I detested; and yet I gave way, merely stipulating for another three months. And now those three months had likewise passed swiftly by.

"To-morrow, to-morrow!" I said, as I sat there.

And then I started, for I knew that midnight must have long passed, and that it was *to-day*.

Ann had been to see Mr. Moore, and he had sadly shaken his head at her, and she had come back weeping, and with her eyes swollen up, and I had not let her come near me.

She was awake there still, for I kept hearing a sob; but I felt that I could not bear to have a soul near me to see the despair in which I was plunged, and the poor girl had crept as near to me as she

could, and sat there to weep again, for she was a sharer in my sorrow.

But she was not like me. She was true, and steadfast, and faithful, while I—what was I? False to the vows I had made to myself; and, starting to my knees, I tried to pray again that, living or dead, I might have some sign—something to guide me, and that I might be saved from this hateful fate.

I cannot tell even now whether I slept or whether I was awake; but as the sun rose I was down on my knees still praying, as I had never prayed before, for strength for the battle that was before me; and when I rose it was to open my door to poor Ann, who, half sitting, half kneeling, was still on the mat outside.

"Oh, Miss Jessie," she sobbed—and catching my hand in hers, she began to kiss it, and cry over it—"how pale you look, my poor dear!"

"Ann," I said, and my heart seemed to leap again as I spoke, "Ann, they are not dead."

"Oh, Miss Jessie!"

"I saw them last night, Ann. John Berry was standing by his side, and—he had his hands stretched out to me, as he had that day when I refused to hear him. They are alive, Ann, they are alive, and calling upon us to save them; and we must go."

She caught my hands in hers, and looked in my face as if she thought me out of my senses.

"Miss Jessie," she said, "do you know what you are saying?"

"Do I know what I am saying?—yes. I know they are alive—frozen up there in the cruel ice; that they are calling to us to save them, while we are wasting time, and dreaming that they are dead."

"But John—John Berry, Miss Jessie? You saw him?"

"As plainly as I see you now, Ann," I cried.

"Oh, say it again, miss—say it again," she exclaimed, clinging to me, but only to burst out sobbing the next moment. "Oh, no, no, no! he's dead and gone—dead and gone! Oh, Miss Jessie—oh, my poor darling, they've fretted and worried you into this wedding, and it's driven you half daft. Sit down, my poor darling—lie down, and let me bathe your head. Oh, that I should live to see such a day!"

I was struggling with her then; for she had caught me in her arms, as though I had been a child, and had carried me to the bed, where she held me down, till, feeling my own weakness, I lay quite still.

What should I do, I asked myself? Should I dissimulate, and let them think I was ill; or should I dare all, and declare that I would not be Stephen Ellerby's wife?

I trembled as I asked myself those questions; for the thoughts of all that I should have to encounter came crowding upon me. They would, I felt sure, take Ann Brent's word, and think me mad. Let them, then, so long as I was saved from Stephen Ellerby's persecution. But it was now six o'clock, and at nine he would be at the church, waiting to make me his wife.

His wife! Oh, how impossible I felt that it was

"HUNTING BY THEIR FROZEN-IN SHIP."—(Page 202.)



now; and, come what might, I was determined that it should never be.

"Ann," I said at last, after lying quietly for a while, and allowing her to bathe my temples—"Ann, do you think me ill?"

"No, Miss Jessie, darling, but I know you are; and as soon as they are awake, they must send for the doctor."

"But I am not ill," I exclaimed, starting up, and catching her hands. "I am not ill; but this marriage cannot take place—I will not be his wife."

"But, my darling, it's too late," whimpered Ann, who was as soft-hearted as she was big and strong. "There's no getting off it, with your wedding dress, and your presents, and the company coming."

"When I know that he's dead, I'll be Stephen Ellerby's wife," I exclaimed, in a tone that startled myself; "but till it is proved, the wedding shall not be. Let me get up."

She offered no resistance, and I crossed the room to bathe my hot face and arrange my hair, before trying to nerve myself for all I had to go through; while, watching eagerly my every movement, and wringing her hands with the trouble that oppressed her, Ann hovered about the bed-room door.

CHAPTER V.

IN another hour I had mamma with me, and listened to her prayers, and lastly to her angry words, as she accused me, as soon as she felt sure I was really well, of folly and madness for putting such faith in a wild dream. It was a sin against Mr. Ellerby, she said; and how he was to be faced on this the morning when, after patience such as few men would have shown, he looked for the consummation of his hopes, she could not tell.

Then she tried all that persuasion and appeal would do—again begging, with the tears running down her cheeks, that I would not disgrace them by such folly; and lastly my father came, ready at first to call me self-willed and obstinate, but only to leave me at last looking helpless and bewildered.

I could not help it; and I sat like a stone, suffering at heart for their trouble, but feeling that I could not give way—I could have died sooner. And at last I was left alone with Ann, when the weak tears came for awhile; and then, as I thought of how the time was going, I shivered, for I knew that before long Stephen Ellerby would arrive.

Then I sat and wondered what would be done—whether they would send word to him at once or leave him to go to the church. I felt that I could not stir in the matter; but I hoped sincerely that he would be warned first, and not have it come upon him there like a shock.

"Ann," I gasped at last, for I felt how cowardly, how utterly weak I was to sustain the burden I had undertaken to bear.

She was at my side in a moment.

"I want you to promise," I said, as I listened while I spoke, for it seemed to me that there were voices downstairs, and I was expecting each moment the message which I knew must come—that Mr. Ellerby was below, and begged that I would see him—"I want you to promise, Ann," I said, "that you will stand by me through all this trouble, never

—no matter what is said—leaving my side, but helping me and sustaining me till they have been found."

"But, Miss Jessie," she faltered, "didn't you promise to be married this morning?"

"Yes," I said; "but was not I driven to promise it on account of them! Listen to me, Ann—will you be my help and stay in this time of trouble? I did promise, but I did not know then that he was alive; and it would be madness and perjury to go to the altar now. But you will help me, Ann?"

"Aye, that I will, Miss Jessie, through thick and thin; and if what you think is true, and not a dream, I'll bless the day that seems now to be full of sorrow for us all."

I knew it must come before long; and I shivered, and looked at Ann, as I heard Stephen Ellerby's voice below, when she drew her hands from mine as I clung to them, and going across the room, opened the door, so that the voice came up angrily; and it seemed to be as I had dreaded: they had not sent word to the church—fearing to do so, I suppose—and now he had come.

But Ann had had her reason for opening the door; the next moment she had drawn the key from the outside, to close the door and lock it.

"They sha'n't come in now, unless you give me orders to let them," she said, triumphantly. "We're only two weak women, but perhaps we can work with our wits, too; and if you mean to keep to it, my own darling Miss Jessie, that you won't be married, why you sha'n't be—so there, now."

It was a cruel trial, cruel to all concerned; but what could I do? First there was my mother, then my father at the door, begging to be admitted; and last of all, they allowed Mr. Ellerby to come up, and when he found that it was not opened to him, he appealed to me from outside, till I felt that I could not bear it.

If I could have fled I would not have cared, but all I could do was to sit and listen; till in a fit of rage, and breathing endless angry threats because, as he said, he had been made such a fool, he went away.

CHAPTER VI.

THE next morning I was in Mr. Moore's office. Ann was with me; for, in spite of my strong resolves, I felt that I could not stir without her. I did not fear coming here, because I felt that Stephen Ellerby would be sure to stay away.

I had always been such a favourite of old Mr. Moore, that I felt sure I had only to explain myself to gain his sympathy; and as he sat upon the edge of his office table, where he had cleared a place by removing some of the papers, he began softly beating my hand with one of his, and nodding his head, as he listened attentively. Then he turned, and gazed full in my face.

"And do you mean to keep to this, little Jess?" he said.

"Yes, indeed, Mr. Moore. I could not marry him now. You are ready to laugh at me, perhaps; but, oh, I feel so certain that Mark—Mr. Grant—is alive. I saw him with his companion amongst the icebergs, hunting by their frozen-in ship, and all so

plainly. And why should we not have evidences such as this? Why should he not be able, in some mysterious way, to impress upon those who—upon his friends that he still exists?"

"My little girl, my little girl," said Mr. Moore, "I'm no doctor, but this is all brain—over-excitement. You ought to be sent away for two or three months—seaside—south—eh?"

"Oh, Mr. Moore," I cried, piteously, "I have no one but you to ask for advice. Both my father and mother are angry with me, and bitter at what they call my madness, when it is no madness at all. Pray, help me!"

"Help you, little one—of course I will; but what do you want me to do? You have said that you will not marry Steve Ellerby. Well, if you keep to that, they can't make you; and I'm not sorry, little Jess, not sorry."

"No, Mr. Moore—oh, no, I cannot marry him; but Mr. Grant—about Mr. Grant?"

"Well, little one, what can we do about him?"

"We must send and find him, and bring him out of his dangerous position directly."

"Fit out a Polar expedition, eh? and get volunteers, and a stout ship, and provisions for a three years' voyage under a clever captain, eh?"

"Oh, yes, yes, yes," I cried, joyfully; "that is it, exactly. Only it must be done at once."

"Little one—little one—little one," he said in his slow, deliberate manner, as he went on patting my hand, "I shall begin to sign for the madness after all; such an expedition is impossible."

"Impossible! Oh, Mr. Moore," I cried—"when our fellow-creatures are calling to us to save them; when they are environed with the perils and dangers of the Arctic seas, and we, with every comfort around us, talk in cold, matter-of-fact words of their position, knowing that they ask for our aid, and then say it is impossible!"

"Little one," he said, quietly, as, choking almost, I ceased speaking, "have you a hundred thousand pounds to obtain a vessel, and fit her specially for the search?"

"Oh, Mr. Moore, I am penniless."

"My little girl," he said, kindly, "to send upon an expedition of search in the far north would require special arrangements—a well-found ship, a picked crew, sledges, dogs, clothing of furs, an enormous outfit; and without these the people who organized such a venture would be sending good men and true to a fearful death. It is an expedition of great peril, and only to be undertaken after much preparation. It is, I must grant, just possible that, having been too venturesome in his desire to obtain a full cargo of tubs, Captain Grant went too far north, and became entangled in the ice, where he now lies; but I am obliged to take a shrewd, matter-of-fact view of the case. It may sound hard—almost cruel; but to a plain man, what does all you have said tend to point out? Why, that you, in the trouble of your poor little heart, went to sleep, and dreamed about the poor fellow that occupied your thoughts. There, there, there—don't cry; but this searching is next to impossible. I don't blame you for giving up the wedding, only for driving it so long, and letting Stephen expect it was to be; but

there, I believe you were half bullied into it, and will say no more."

"But Mr. Moore—dear Mr. Moore, can you not help me? I know—I am sure he is alive, that he is calling to me to save him. I must go—I will go—I cannot bear to sit here helpless. If I were to, I should go mad."

"There—there—you are excited, little one," Mr. Moore said, gently; and then, in a way such as I had never heard him speak in before, he made poor Ann jump, as he cried to her, "You great ghipes, why are you staring open-mouthed at your mistress like that? Here, have you no salts, or scent, or anything?"

Ann was at my side in a moment, for I believe I was half hysterical, and ready to throw myself about wildly, in the horror and excitement which oppressed me.

"Now, look here, Jessie," he said then, firmly—"this is childish, this is not what I expected of you. I gave you the credit of more self-government. How can I help you if you go on like this?"

If I had been turned into stone on the instant, I could not have become more motionless than I did under his words.

"Come, now, that is good," he said, encouragingly; "that's sensible. I like that, and I'll try to help you all I can. Now, suppose we have in old Pash, and ask his opinion about your father's ship, eh?"

"Yes, please," I said, with an effort to keep up the calmness.

"Better and better," said Mr. Moore. "Now we shall get to a common sense view of the case. Here comes somebody, though; and I said I was not to be disturbed. Ellerby!"

Stephen Ellerby threw open the door at this moment, and walked angrily into the room.

"The interview at last, then!" he exclaimed; but the next moment he had softened down, and approached me gently. "Dear Jessie," he exclaimed, "this has not been kind."

My Run down the Geyser.

WAL, I'll tell you; but, mind you, 'taint a pleasant thing relating anecdotes to you Britishers, for you're so mighty cocky that if a man of the New Country's done a bit of anything that's some spry, you're that jealous that you grin at him and call it Yankee buncombe, or say it's a stretcher. So you may take it or leave it; believe it, or set it down as one and carry nought; only don't say anything to my face, for I've got a perky bad habit of getting riled, and when I do get riled I reckon if I met a grizzly bar he'd think twice, and then get out o' the way.

You see, stranger, I jined a party to go out to Iceland—a little out-of-the-way spot, you know, made out there in the north by a bit of a red-hot mountain that's gone on spitting cinders till they've collected round in heaps, and the grass has grown some, and the poor savages have huddled together on it with a few ponies, and a good deal of rain and snow, and there they go on dying year after year. They don't live, you know, but begin to die as soon

as they're born, 'cause they haven't gumption enough to emigrate westward.

There aint much to see but ice, and cinders, and lava, which is the stuff they make into pen trays, inkstands, and other culinary utensils. Trees aint, and grass is—some. It grows in the walls and on the roofs of people's houses, because it's so wet under foot that it takes cold in its roots.

It's a very cheerful sort of place, Iceland. Natur's got a big fog factory there, and has a large supply of mists allays on hand, with rain enough to keep 'em myste from year's end to year's end.

Don't take you so very long to see all there is to see, but you leave a deal of human off your shins on the rough edges of the lava, and you don't get used to it, somehow. You go to this lake and over that jökull, as they call it, and then you ask yourself what you went for, and you never get any answer, because you don't know. Next you go to Hecla, and that aint nice, either. It might be if you had skin disease, and took plenty of molasses with you to take with the brimstone; but without treacle it's some nasty—for you don't swallow it, but take it up your nose, and into your lungs, and a very little goes a very long way—in fact, all over you, and sticks in your clothes till you feel as if you had been making matches in a big factory, and carried no end in your pockets.

We saw some waterfalls too—playthings, sirree, playthings—somewhere about big enough to turn a mighty juvenile saw-mill; and they pynted us out some mountains, as they call 'em there—scraps of hills, you know; and at last one morning we got on some little bits of ponies to go and see the hot springs—geysers, as they call 'em.

Them perky little rough ponies tried hard to get off what skin we'd got left after barking ourselves amongst the lava, and they did it too some, for I was precious sore. We took a lot of stuff with us—rations and tents—and a nice job we had getting across streams and over bogs; but at last, when I began to think I should go back sick out and out, there was a lot of steam, like as if there was a big, hot wash on.

"Them's the geysers," said some one in the party.

And some one else called one "Old Strokkr," and another "the little Strokkr."

I got off my pony as soon as I could, and went to have a look at the darned thing so much fuss had been made about; and there it was, a dirty mound, like the outsides of old oyster shells, with a big saucer of a hollow at the top, about sixty foot across, and a hole in the middle, like a six-foot well. It was all grey, dirty-looking stuff, and I got in and walked to the edge of the well, and looked down it; and only that it was hot and steamy I might have looked down a well at home, and been a deal more happy.

"Wal, I reckon I shan't go down," I says, and I turned back, thinking what a fool I'd been to come; only it was worth while to come and see the place where nature manufactured her mists and fogs, for just as I'd got out of the basin, there was a hiss and a rush, and a lot of water came bubbling up the big well place, and filled the basin full in no time; and the clouds of mist as rolled off was a sight.

It was early in the afternoon, and they said perhaps the thing would begin to play; but it kinder didn't till 'bout four o'clock, when—bang!—there was a reg'lar sound of a general bust-up of Iceland, and the water all hot, as if out of a kettle, made a bit of a spout up; but it only went up a few feet, and went down again.

Thinks I, though, I should like to see how low it's gone down, and I went to the edge of the basin, when—scissors!—there was a bang like an earthquake, and the water shot up like a hot fountain, a hundred feet high, and kept on squirting, till it sank lower and lower, and went down out of sight again; and the basin was empty.

"If you pitches bits o' turf or stones down it makes it squirt again," says one of the travellers; so we got pitching bits down the hole; but it did no good 'till I took hold of a big turf, and walked close to the edge of the hole, and looked down into the steam and darkness, dropping the big turf, and listening at last to the cissing noise ever so far below.

"That won't do no good," I says, and I turned to get out of the basin; when before I knew where I was, sir, up came the hot water, knocked me off my feet, filled the basin, and before I could take a stroke to save myself, or say any more than "Tell 'em to remember me at home," I was sucked down, sir, into that horrible black hole, and fell with the water hundreds upon hundreds of feet—thousands, I dessey it was, for I was a good half-hour going down—to find myself sitting at last in a big round cavern of a place, smooth as could be; and, in spite of being all that way under ground, looking light, with a sort of phosphorus gleam that warn't at all pleasant.

At first I could only choke and sneeze, what with the water and the sulphury smell; but I soon got over that, and began to look about me.

I was a bit afraid to move, I tell you, for a few minutes; but that soon went off, and being, like my nation, of a rather investigating nature, I began to pick at the smooth, drab-looking floor and walls of the big round place, and then I laughed.

It may seem strange to you that a man, soaked with hot water as I was, should laugh; but laugh I did, and I'll tell you why. It was because the place put me so in mind of the inside of a great big tea-kettle. 'Twas so, just like the inside of a big tea-kettle—all fur, you know, and round, and drab, and steamy.

Then, looking upwards, I could see a great, big round hole, full of steam; and, looking downwards, there were a whole lot of holes running in all directions, and down them you could hear the water glucking and bubbling up, as if there was a big fire somewhere under them, and I didn't kinder care to go too near, in case of an accident.

Of course I ought to have felt very much frightened; but somehow I didn't, being so interested in the place; and I walked all round it—not that that took very long, the place being only about twenty yards across. Then I chipped off a few bits of the tea-kettle fur, and put them in my pocket for specimens in case I got out again; for I seemed to think that I should get out again somehow if I

waited long enough; and then I came to the conclusion that there was no more to see, only the round tea-kettle-shaped place, with a big hole where the lid should have been, running up to daylight like a chimney shaft, and the holes running farther down underground, where I didn't feel inclined to go on account of the heat of the water.

After a bit I sat myself down and had a wring, so as to get rid of a lot of the superfluous water; and my word, sir, how the steam did rise. It set me thinking of what a fine privilege that place would be if I could get it to home, and turn it into a medicated hot bath, for the cure of every mortal disease under the sun. That the place had its curative properties, there wasn't a doubt; for I felt a wonderful deal better in a very short time. There wasn't much the matter with me before, but I was ready to write a testimonial if I'd got up a Great Geyser, Hot Spring, and Medicated Bathing Company.

The thoughts of that kept me going for some time, and I set in my own mind what I would put the shares at, and whom I'd get for chairman and directors; and by then I was about tired of being there, for I wanted a smoke, and you couldn't smoke in such a wash-house steam as there was rolling up out of the holes.

"Wal," I says to myself, "I wonder whether the darned thing means to spit me out again. It can't want to keep me here much longer."

I was sitting then just under the big hole that ran up to the surface, and I looked up to see if I could get sight of a bit of daylight, when—bang!—down comes a great tod of peat turf, and caught me right in the face, half blinding me.

"Drop that," I shouts, savagely—I meant to say don't drop it, for it was evident that my friends were pitching bits of turf down the hole to make the thing play again and pitch me out.

Bless you, I hadn't more than time to get out of the way, when down comes an Australian meat tin, and then a lump of lava and some more turf; and though I kept shouting to 'em to leave off, they were such a distance off that they never heard me, and I only made myself cough.

"Go it," I says—for there was a darned old shoe and a beer bottle came next. And then I got a bit wild to think how men could be such fools as to keep on throwing down things, when all the while they might hit me.

I noticed, though, that some of the rubbish they threw down fell into one of the holes, and the meat tin went down another; and, when I heard what a rowdy-dow it caused down below, I got a bit nervous for the first time.

But that passed off; and at last, being down tired of waiting, I thought I'd go down one of the holes a little way; and I picked out one that went of a slant—the one the meat tin explored—and began to lower myself down just as if one was in a big sewer, when—plosh!—before I knew where I was, up came the meat tin, and fetched me such a bang on the head as made it ache again; but there was no time to rub it, for up rushed the hot water furiously, carried me like a cork into the round chamber—which filled up in a moment—and then—squirt!—up I

went such a fizz, higher and higher, right up the great hole at such a rate that I couldn't get my breath; and, when I did come to a little, it was with being shot out into daylight, and carried up the column of water full sixty feet, with it keeping on playing like a big fountain, and me sitting on the top turning round and round like a cork ball.

I heard my friends shout, and I could see them waving their hands at me; but there I was. It was no use to beckon a fellow to come down, when the water kept pushing him up; and at last I began to think I should be carried down again if I didn't look out.

That bothered me a bit; but I began to see my way out of it at last. The hole, you know, was about six foot acrost. Wal, I'm six foot acrost; but when I puts up my hands far as I can stretch, I'm long ways on to eight foot acrost. So I threw myself into a swimming position, and struck out just as the water began to fall; and it was well as I did so, for sartain I should have been sucked down again, 'stead of which the water went, leaving me acrost the hole—hands one side, feet the other—till my friends came and dragged me away, and very wet I was.

"Ah," says one of them, "I reckon as it was that 'Stralian meat tin as did it."

I was that wet and wild that I didn't make him no answer, only set to wringing myself.

"Wal," says one of them, "and what do you think of the land?"

"Go down and see," I says.

But he wouldn't, and he seemed hurt because I wasn't grateful to him for making the thing squirt. I couldn't be, you know; for who can tell what I mightn't have discovered right away down that t'other hole? I might have got to the thing's works, and seen them; for of course it's got works, or else it wouldn't go.

I'd had enough of hot springs after that, and was very glad to get out of the cold, wet place; and I reckon I shan't go no more. But you may put all I've told you down for fact; and if anybody don't believe it, you needn't trouble, for there's always some darned perky critters about, without any more faith in 'em than a muskittur, who never will believe as you mean to smash him till he finds himself spread out flat upon a wall.

The Egotist's Note-book.

"WHAT do you think of the situation now?" asked a well-known politician of a diplomat, the other day, *apropos* of Lord Salisbury's mission. "I don't think there can be two opinions about the matter," responded the diplomat. "Why so?" inquired the other. "Because," said the diplomat, "everybody's so certain of peace now, that there's sure to be war."

A daily paper says:—"The Right Hon. John Bright and Mrs. Bright, who are now staying at Llandudno, drove over to Bodnant Hall, the residence of Mr. H. D. Pochin, and planted some trees in commemoration of their visit. Mr. Bright has

promised to attend a meeting of the Peace Society at Llandudno." Now, Mr. Bright is an estimable gentleman, whom we all respect; but who cares to know this? Why is it not announced that, after partaking of a shoulder of mutton lunch, John Smith walked to the end of my street, and, taking the 'bus, sat on the knifeboard all the way to London, cracking and peeling walnuts, as he cast the shells into the road? It would be quite as interesting.

The following postal jottings are culled from some scarce, unpublished documents in the British Museum, date 1735:—

"Though the number of letters missive in England were not at all considerable in our ancestors' days, yet it is now so prodigiously great (since the meanest people have generally learnt to write) that the revenue amounts to about £110,000 a year.

"A letter containing a whole sheet of paper is conveyed 80 miles for 3d., and 2 sheets 6d., and an ounce of letters but 1s.; and above 20 miles a single letter is 4d., a double letter 8d., and an ounce 1s. 4d.; and that in so short a time by night as well as by day that every 24 hours the post goes 120 miles; and in five or six days an answer may be had from a place 300 miles distant from the writer."

Well may we exclaim that there is nothing new under the sun, for at this very time (1735) a penny post existed, superior in some respects to that of which we now boast, as far as London and its suburbs are concerned:—

"Moreover, to the great benefit of the City and places adjacent, there is established another post, called the penny post, whereby, for one penny, any letter or parcel not exceeding 16 ounces weight, or £10 value, is most speedily and safely conveyed to and from all parts within the bills of mortality to most towns within 7 miles round London, and conveniently served by the general post.

"The profits of this, as well as all lawful carriage of letters, belongs to his Majesty, are settled on him by Act of Parliament, and managed for him by a comptroller. And for the better carrying on this useful design, there are six general offices kept at convenient distances from one another; at all which officers do constantly attend from morning until night every day, Sundays only excepted.

"And a further convenience of this office is, that whatsoever letters come from all parts of the world by the general post, directed to persons in any of those country towns to which the penny post does go, they are delivered by the messengers thereof, the same day they come to London, and the answers being left at the receiving-houses, are by them safely carried every night to the office in Lombard-street."

Times are altered now.

Hero worship, Mr. Thomas Carlyle will be pleased to learn, still flourishes in Egypt. A correspondent says that during Mr. Goschen's recent visit to Cairo, the curiosity to see the "wonderful financier" was extremely great. A rich cultivator came a long distance merely to catch a glimpse of him. He went

to Mr. Goschen's hotel, and begged leave to sit in the hall until the right hon. gentleman went by; and there he waited patiently for more than an hour, until he had had his desire, when he went contented away. Even the beys struggled to get a peep at the "man who had saved Egypt." Perhaps when they saw him they were not altogether satisfied; for although Mr. Goschen is good at figures, his own figure is not strikingly imposing.

Politics are eschewed by the best families in the United States, because it is not thought respectable to meddle with them. The government of the country being for the most part in the hands of adventurers and "carpet-baggers," the "best families" deem it to be the most patriotic course to leave these gentlemen in possession. The excitement of the Presidential election, however, disturbs the equanimity even of the "best families;" and it is recorded that a little girl was unreprieved the other day for telling her parents, with some complacency, that there were only two Democrats in her class.

The Brixton burglar is a unique specimen. He does not wait until the occupants of a house are gone to bed. He just looks in at the front bedroom window at about seven p.m., locks the door, securely wedges it, and then calmly sorts out the jewellery, selecting what suits him, and leaving the Paris articles behind. He totally ignores the existence of the inmates downstairs, since all their efforts to find the police generally result in the discovery of only one constable, who, in spite of all Colonel Henderson's tactical drill, has not yet been able to accomplish the feat of surrounding the house.

The late Chief-Justice Whiteside was a noteworthy illustration of the truth of the maxim that opportunity makes the man. His father was the rector of the out-of-the-way parish of Delgany, and James had to push his fortune in the world. The O Connell prosecutions in 1843 gave him an opportunity; and his defence of Mr. Duffy, of the *Nation* newspaper, made his reputation. Thenceforward his career was an almost uninterrupted run of good fortune, and it was only a question of political ill-feeling that prevented him from obtaining the Irish Lord Chancellorship.

Now that winter has come, and ladies are looking forward to many a pleasant evening spent in the enjoyment of the dance, they often forget the attendant fatigue, until the exhaustion of the following day reminds them that every pleasure has its alloy. This fatigue is in great measure produced by the tight ligature or garter with which the stockings are fastened, hindering the free circulation of the blood. Medical men are unanimous in declaring the use of garters to be a most fruitful source of disease. Every lady desiring health and comfort should at once provide herself with a pair of the new patent stocking suspenders, made by Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London. The price is only 3s. per pair, of any draper, or post free for two extra stamps.

Three Hundred Virgins.

A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS.

CHAPTER XI.—SOME ONE AT WORK.

A WEEK passed away, during which all fears of the vessel getting afloat or breaking up were at an end, for she had settled now almost upon an even keel, right in the sand; and already it was evident that the water around them was less deep, pointing to the fact that, as time went on, the tide would gradually heap the sand around the vessel, till they could communicate with the shore afoot.

This decided Deborah—who had assumed and took the lead in all discussions—in making the ship their home; and the idea which Helston had proposed of emptying the hold of all the stores, the cabins of their furniture, and then blowing up the vessel, so that its pieces might float ashore and be used for building, was definitely put aside. For, with a house already to their hands, one which a little daily pumping kept quite dry, and which, in the course of time, would be on dry land, such a proceeding would have been absurd.

At first, the enmity displayed by Deborah to Helston was virulent in its character; but as, after a few conversations with Laurent, the former ceased to oppose her, things went on pretty smoothly.

Laurent was rapidly getting well, and as the young men had conversed upon the subject, they came to the conclusion that it was hardly worth while to keep up a scene of bickering, when a little yielding would, without hurting them, make matters pleasant for all.

"As far as I see," said Laurent, "all we have to do is to let the silly woman have her own way, so long as she does not interfere with us."

"Let her enjoy the rights of women so long as they do not interfere with the rights of men, eh?" said Helston. "What do you say, Miss Monroe?"

"I think," said she, "that our aim should be to do that which is for the benefit of all."

And she lowered her eyes, blushing at the doctor's earnest gaze.

"And I think it would be very cowardly to give way to such a woman," said Mary Dance, sharply. "I haven't patience with her."

"Never mind, Mary; let her have her own way for a while," said Helston. "I believe it is the best way with women, and they soon tire."

"A nice measurement of a woman's brains, Mr. Helston," said Mary. "Do you hear, Miss Monroe?—well, there, girl, don't look at me like that—do you hear, Grace Monroe, then—he thinks we are like children."

"Let us be children in obedience to what is best, then," said Grace, smiling.

"I'll do as the others do," said Mary, shortly.

"Yes, I know you will, Mary," said Helston; "and, depend upon it, Mr. Laurent and I will always be ready to stand by you both, if there is any particular set made at you by the strong-minded party."

There was no excuse for a nurse now, though Laurent had done all he could to keep Mary Dance at his side; and it was on this day that she told him he must shift for himself.

"But, Mary," he said, tenderly, as he tried to take her hand, which was sharply withdrawn, "you are never going to leave me yet—weak as I am?"

"You are quite strong enough to get about now, sir."

"Sir?"

"Well, Mr. Laurent, then," said Mary, whose cheeks were burning.

"Have I offended you, Mary?" he said.

"Offended me? Oh, no, sir."

"Sir again, Mary? Then why are you in such a hurry to go?"

"Because you are so much better," she said, quickly.

"But I want to say something to you, Mary. I want to tell you something which has forced itself more strongly than ever upon me since I have seen you about me these last few days. Mary—dear Mary, I ——"

"Stop, sir, please," she said, shortly. "If you have any respect for me, don't say any more. You know how I am situated here, and how most of those women feel towards me. Do you want to make me unhappy and miserable amongst them?"

"Mary," he said, excitedly, "I'd give my life to make you happy."

"I won't ask for that, sir," she said, quickly; "only give me your silence. Recollect, I am under your protection now more than ever."

She hurried out of the cabin, and went to where Grace Monroe was sitting alone in the saloon, working.

"Has the young doctor been here?" said Mary, looking searchingly at her friend.

"No," said Grace, meeting her eyes fearlessly.

"Has he been making love to you?"

Grace rose, and drew herself up.

"I believe Mr. Helston to be a gentleman," she said, quietly, "and that he will always treat me with respect."

"Yes," said downright Mary, "and with love as well."

"Mary!"

"Oh, it's all very well to say 'Mary,' but do you think I haven't seen through him, ever since we came on board? If he hasn't been making love to you yet, he will directly, and I dare say you'll be as stupid as I am."

Grace looked at her wonderingly.

"Has—has Mr. Helston spoken to you, then?" she said, in a husky voice.

"No," said Mary, her pleasant face expanding into a smile, "but that other fellow has. No sooner does he get well than he grows impertinent; and it's time for us to join the other side, so come along."

"I shall always look upon you as my friend, Mary, and be guided by you," said Grace, simply.

"Don't—no, don't," said Mary, bursting into tears, as she threw herself on her knees, and buried her face in her friend's lap. "I'm only a silly, soft fool, Grace; and I felt just now as if that wretch of a mate could turn me round his finger. I hate myself. I could bite my tongue off. I could—there's somebody coming. Let's go."

She started up, and dashed away the tears, to look in Grace's face, which was alternately white

and rosy red, for at that moment Helston came in, spoke to both of them pleasantly, and then entered Laurent's cabin.

"Let us go now, then," said Grace, hastily, as she caught Mary's hand in hers.

"Yes," said Mary, "it's quite time," and she gave a hysterical sob as she caught Grace in her arms. "I begin to wish there were no men at all, and that we were all alone. But, never mind. And now, mind this, don't give way a bit; for we've got a fight before us as soon as we go to those beauties, and I'm glad of it, for there will be something else to think about."

CHAPTER XII.—AN EXPEDITION.

MARY DANCE was quite right—there was a fight before them, and they needed preparation.

It was afternoon when this scene took place, and the women were hard at work, for they had not, in spite of their high notions, refused to follow the advice given by Helston and Laurent.

One of the first things done during the past week had been the getting of a long spar ashore. Tools had been found in the hold, both gardening and carpenters', and a party had started under the guidance of Laurent and the black to carry the spar right to the top of the mountain, where they arrived without so much difficulty as had attended the first exploration, and without any of the dangers. There then a hole was dug by 'Thello, the spar set up as a flagstaff, firmly bedded round with pieces of lava, secured by stays, and a flag hoisted to flutter there as a signal in case of a ship coming in sight.

The next thing done was to contrive some means of communication with the shore, for the raft work was tedious, the boat too much stove for repair; and here Laurent's advice was taken, Deborah getting his directions, and then furnishing them to her followers.

Laurent's plan was to get up from the stores a sufficiency of rope—about four hundred yards being needed. This was spliced together in lengths, one end well secured to the stump of the mainmast, the other end taken ashore, passed round one of the nearest cocoa trees, and drawn as tight as possible, so as to form a line of communication.

Then a light raft was made by nailing planks on four water casks. This was launched, and attached to the cable by a short line and a big iron ring, to which two long lines were attached, and a party ashore could rapidly draw the raft one way, while a party on board drew it back.

This proved so successful, and was such an easy means of transferring things to and fro, that Deborah Burrows actually smiled, and kept her followers at work upon it till dark.

For the party had come to the conclusion that they would live precisely as if there was no prospect of any assistance coming.

"And, indeed," said Deborah one day, "what do we need with help or change, when we have so beautiful an island that we can call our own?"

So plans were made, gardening was talked of, excursions decided upon to search for fruit, and Helston and 'Thello's story about the serpents duly pish-pooed as a plot to keep them on board.

A dozen women ashore were just beginning to haul at the raft, laden with working tools, spades, hatchets, billhooks, and hoes, for the marking out and digging of the new garden, which had been planned, and for which abundance of seeds were in store—seeds destined for the colony—when Grace Monroe and Mary Dance went forward along the deck, towards where Deborah Burrows was standing.

"Well," said Deborah, "what now? Is the mate worse?"

"No," said Mary, quietly, "he is better."

"Better?" said Deborah, sharply.

"Yes," said Mary, quietly; "able to shift for himself, so we have left him."

"You've quarrelled, and they turned you adrift," said Deborah, spitefully; "and now you come sneaking to us."

"No," said Mary, quietly, "we have not quarrelled; and they do not yet know that we have left them."

Deborah's eyes sparkled, and a malignant smile played about her lips. She was evidently undecided how to act.

The fact was, she was debating in her mind whether to wreak her malice upon the two girls, or the men. It was a fine opportunity to spitefully use the girls, and tell them to go back to those whom they had chosen to follow; but, on the other hand, there was the winning of these two over to their own side, and leaving the men helpless and dependent—alone.

This latter movement found most favour, and she said, ungraciously—

"Well, you can stay."

No more was said then; but, half an hour after, while they were below, they heard Helston's voice.

He was busy trying to make some addition to their salt provisions by rigging out fishing tackle over the side, and great success attended his first trials, the result being a good heavy basket of fish, which 'Thello undertook to dish up in a satisfactory fashion.

He had just finished, and was talking to Laurent on the probability of there being game of any kind, or wild pig, in the woods, when it struck him that neither Mary Dance nor Grace Monroe were in their customary places, sewing by the cabin door, and he went to see—finding out for the first time that they were gone.

"Have you had anything to do with this, Deborah Burrows?" he said, turning sharply upon her.

"Not I," was the reply. "They saw how sensible it would be to return to us, and they have come."

"Then you have done it by force," said Helston, angrily.

"Force!" was the contemptuously uttered answer. "Not I; they came of themselves."

She turned away, and there was conviction in the look that accompanied her words.

Helston frowned, but he said nothing, feeling that it was better to wait; and fully determined that, when opportunity came, he would ask Grace Monroe to be his wife.

"And Laurent will ask Mary Dance," he thought to himself. "Well, and why not? Surely, under the circumstances, we can be married here as firmly as

if we waited to reach a civilized shore—waited, perhaps, for years—perhaps for ever. Help may never come.”

It was a depressing thought, but one he was compelled to harbour; for there seemed no prospect of relief: they had evidently been driven far out of the track of civilization, and a vessel might never come near them. If, then, this was to be their fate, nothing remained for it but to be resigned, and to make the best of their situation.

There was a long and anxious talk between him and Laurent that night, and the next morning they went ashore, for there was to be an expedition start, under the orders of Deborah Burrows, for a survey of the land, and to see what it offered in the way of food for three hundred people.

Laurent declared himself well enough to go some part of the way; and, without saying anything, Helston well armed himself and the black—Laurent taking a revolver, his injured arm preventing the use of a gun.

On the men making their appearance on the sands, Deborah burst into a scornful laugh.

“See,” she said, pointing to the two, “they must have firearms to protect themselves, while helpless women are content with a hatchet to cut away the brambles and thorns.”

“You may change your tone, Madam Deborah,” said Helston, in an undertone; and then they set forward, the women, led by Deborah, going first, and the men ignominiously behind—for Deborah had butly resented an effort made by Helston to take the lead.

Their walk was more along the skirts of the wood than into the interior; and as this was diversified with park-like patches, scene after scene of beauty was reached, to delight the emigrant girls, to whom more than ever the stay in the island seemed a picnic or pleasure trip.

All thought of human inhabitant had long passed away from Helston's mind; but he was still strongly of opinion that there might be animals, small as was the extent of the ground. If a vessel had stayed there while exploring, the probabilities were that the captain would leave two or three pigs, and their presence would be a perfect godsend, now that they were likely to know the want of food.

“Keep a sharp look-out for serpents,” said Helston, as they trudged along.

“That's what I am doing,” was Laurent's reply. “And I say, doctor, does not that settle the question?”

“How?”

“If there are serpents here, there must be animals for them to feed on.”

“Well, there seems to be good logic in that, certainly,” said Helston.

And then 'Thello drew their attention, with a broad grin, to the feminine difficulties as regarded petticoats, a good deal of time being taken up by the women in extricating one another from the thorns which caught them.

They must have tramped five or six miles from the ship, and were quite a mile inland, their course having been turned by a sharp, tolerably wide stream, which seemed to abound with fish, as it

ran bubbling amongst volcanic rocks to the sea, when suddenly there was a shriek in front, followed by another, and another, and the women came tearing back—those who had found danger, and those to whom the fear was communicated—leaving the three men to cover their flight.

The cause of alarm was seen directly after, for the bushes and long grass were all in motion, and a herd of sixty or seventy wild pigs came tearing along, led by a sturdy little boar not much larger than a porker in England.

“Now, 'Thello,” cried Helston, “try and bring one down;” and together they fired, with the result that three of the herd uttered diabolical squeals, and rolled over on their sides, while their companions stopped short, grunting, snorting, and apparently astonished at the strange beings before them.

Before they could recover from their surprise, Helston's second barrel brought down a fourth, and a shot from Laurent's revolver took effect on a fifth, when the herd threw up their snouts, turned tail, and dashed wildly away.

“Fresh pork for a day or two, at all events, 'Thello,” said Helston.

“Yes, sah; but, golly, how de women run! Iyah! iyah!” exclaimed 'Thello, throwing back his head and shrieking with laughter, as he reloaded his piece.

“Run, you black idiot!” said Deborah, coming up; “of course, when two or three weak creatures drove the others back.”

“I sorry to see you dribben back so, ma'am,” said 'Thello, with a serious countenance; “but berry glad to 'nounce, ma'am, dat dere will be roace pork an' apple sass for dinner to-morrow.”

“And a good supply of pork for the future in the island,” said Helston. “Will you give instructions for the meat to be carried back?”

“Sop a bit,” said 'Thello; “I break de meat up, and hab him ready to carry, if we hab some poles.”

Saying which, the black cook turned up his sleeves, drew a long knife, and leaning his rifle against a tree, proceeded to act the butcher's part in the most methodical fashion.

“We may as well halt, and refresh here,” said Deborah. “The trees are shady.”

And the women gathered round her, producing biscuit and cold beef; the great leaves, ready for gathering, forming plates for the repast, while the limpid water from the stream was deliciously cool.

Helston cut down and trimmed five poles ready for slinging the cleansed carcasses, hunting-fashion; and 'Thello was very busy with the third pig. The women were laughing and chattering in the pleasant shade, confidence having been restored by the way in which the guns of the men had driven off the herd.

There was something delightful in the very air they were breathing, and all thought of danger was now gone, when the attention of all was taken up by an exclamation from 'Thello.

He was about to proceed with his task of preparing the fourth pig, which lay at a little distance,

where the trees were thickest, when the poor brute, till then thought dead, uttered a loud squeal, started up, and ran ten or fifteen yards; when to the horror of all, there was a sudden movement amongst the long grass, a rush, and the pig was seized by a great snake, which immediately enveloped it in its folds, contracting them so that, as the wounded beast uttered a yell, its bones were heard to crack.

It had run in the direction of the group of women, and fell dead now in an open place not twenty yards away, the lookers-on clinging to each other, too much horrified to flee, and fascinated by the spectacle enacted before their eyes.

"Oh!" whispered one woman, in a tone which was sufficiently loud to be heard by nearly all, "and there may be thousands of such things about."

Deborah looked very white as her eyes sought those of Helston, and her hand trembled as she pointed at the fold-enveloped pig.

"Why—why don't you shoot?" she gasped at last.

"You said there were no snakes," said Helston, coolly—"that we had invented them as a tale to frighten the strong-minded women. Will you fire?"

He offered her the gun, and she stretched out her hand as if to take it; but she gave in.

"Shoot it—shoot it!" she whispered.

In an instant the gun was raised, but the serpent's head was on the other side, and Helston lowered the piece, wishing to aim at a vital part.

"Golly, mas'r doctor," said 'Thello, "gib him physic, or he hab me nex."

For answer, Helston walked right up to the horrible, writhing object before him, when, alarmed by his approach, the serpent raised its head a yard above its victim, and held it up, quivering and menacingly. The next instant it drew it back to strike, the folds round the pig were withdrawn as if by magic, and a suppressed shriek arose from the women, many of whom covered their faces; but, without raising the piece to his shoulder, Helston presented it at the serpent, drew the trigger, and it fell with its head shattered to pieces, the body writhing horribly for a few minutes, and then heaving sullenly, hardly moving more, as Helston advanced and seized it by the tail.

"Oh, doctor, oh!" shrieked a dozen women; but Helston dragged the faintly writhing beast out of the grass, with no very great ease, till it lay along by the sandy bank of the little river, and he was pacing beside it to see its length—five long paces, which did not represent all; for it was lying in a convoluted form—when Deborah approached him, and, in a softened voice he hardly recognized, said, as she held out her hand—

"Thank you, doctor. I did not know you were such a brave man."

"Pooh, nonsense," he said, smiling, and shaking her hand heartily. "That's nothing more than 'Thello would have done. But I should advise a retreat, for there may be more about."

And as he spoke, a rustle was heard amongst the bushes, and several of the women ran shrieking away.

A San Francisco Earthquake.

THE middle of the broad street was filled with a crowd of breathless, pallid, death-stricken men, who had lost all sense but the common instinct of animals.

There were hysterical men, who laughed loudly without a cause, and talked incessantly of what they knew not. There were dumb, paralyzed men, who stood helplessly and hopelessly beneath cornices and chimneys that toppled over and crushed them. There were automatic men, who, flying, carried with them the work on which they were engaged—one whose hands were full of bills and papers, another who held his ledger under his arm. There were men who rushed from the fear of death into his presence: two were picked up, one who had jumped through a skylight, another who had blindly leaped through a fourth-storey window. There were brave men who trembled like children; there was one whose life had been spent in scenes of daring and danger, who cowered paralyzed in the corner of the room from which a few inches of plastering had fallen. There were hopeful men, who believed that the danger was over, and, having passed, would, by some mysterious law, never recur; there were others who shook their heads and said that the next shock would be fatal. There were crowds around the dust that arose from fallen chimneys and cornices, around runaway horses that had dashed as madly as their drivers against lamp-posts, around telegraph and newspaper offices, eager to know the extent of the disaster.

Along the remoter avenues and cross-streets dwellings were deserted, people sat upon their doorsteps or in chairs upon the side-walks, fearful of the houses they had built with their own hands, and doubtful even of this blue arch above them that smiled so deceitfully; of those far-reaching fields beyond, which they had cut into lots and bartered and sold, and which now seemed to suddenly rise against them, or slip and wither away from their very feet.

It seemed so outrageous that this dull, patient earth, whose homeliness they had adorned and improved, and which, whatever their other fortunes and vicissitudes, at least had been their sure inheritance, should have become so faithless.

Small wonder that the owner of a little house, which had sunk on the reclaimed water-front, stooped in speechless and solemn absurdity of his wrath to shake his clenched fist in the face of the Great Mother.

The real damage to life and property had been so slight, and in such pronounced contrast to the prevailing terror, that, half an hour later, only a sense of the ludicrous remained with the greater masses of the people.

Mr. Dumphy, like all practical, unimaginative men, was among the first to recover his presence of mind with the passing of the immediate danger. People took confidence when this great man, who had so much to lose, after sharply remanding his clerks and everybody else back to business, re-entered his office.—*From Bret Harte, in "Gabriel Conroy."*

A Ghost Story.

DURING our visit to the Sandwich Islands a few years ago, a cold-blooded murder (a rare event in those islands), together with the strange circumstances which were said to have led to its discovery, were in every one's mouth, and would deserve recording, even without the singular personal experience which forms an appropriate conclusion to the story.

The two children of a Woahoo farmer being at a school in the neighbouring island of Mowee, one night the elder of them dreamt that at the evening meal a stranger occupied the place of his father, who was nowhere to be seen. His dream returned a second time, and again a third; on which the child, growing uneasy, told his younger brother, when the latter informed him he likewise had had a dream—viz., that he found his father lying under a cairn, or heap of stones. This combination of circumstances naturally made a deep impression on the children's imaginations—their sports were abandoned, and their health began to suffer; so much so, that the schoolmaster determined to send them home for a while.

Returned to Woahoo, they had no sooner entered the well-known cottage than the truth of their dream seemed to flash before them. There sat the mother with her stranger guest! In the full conviction that the remainder of the dream would be verified, they began their walk of discovery about the island on the following morning. Their efforts were soon crowned with success; for during their second or third day's search they arrived at a spot where the air seemed tainted, and their attention was directed to a heap of stones. These cairns, or heaps of stones, here, as in other countries, mark the place of burial, or the division of properties, and are therefore seldom or never disturbed; which will account, probably, for one of them being selected by the murderers for the concealment of the body of their victim.

The children forthwith sought one of the chiefs, to whom they communicated their suspicions. A party of police was soon on the spot, and, pulling down the heap of stones, succeeded in identifying the body of the missing farmer, and in tracing the murder to his wife and her paramour. These were immediately taken up, tried and condemned on their own confession, and were at this time awaiting their sentence within the walls of the fort.

We will take a hasty view of them, and see how they are spending their last day upon earth; for the morrow's noon is fixed for the execution.

They are confined indiscriminately among other prisoners, in a building near the south-east angle of the fort.

The man seated sullenly, and maintaining dogged silence, in a corner of the ward, is gazing with some surprise at his partner in guilt—a woman of bold, repulsive appearance, who is endeavouring to amuse her fellow-prisoners and visitors with a series of antics illustrative of the fearful death she is about to suffer.

The morrow has arrived—it wants but half an hour of noon; a large concourse of the inhabitants

have been assembled for some time, gazing with feelings of curiosity rather than of awe on the hideous instrument of death which has been erected over the northern gate of the fort, commanding the several approaches from the town and country.

A fresh trade wind is blowing, which causes the huge uprights of the gallows to quiver in their fixtures like the masts of a ship under a press of canvas. A new patent drop, now about to be tried, rattles on its hinges with an ominous sound. A native is seen on the scaffold with two nooses in his hand, which he is endeavouring to make fast to two lengths of chain suspended from the central parts of the cross-beam; but these chains, oscillating in the breeze, continually elude his grasp, and his futile efforts to clutch them elicit shouts of derision from the crowd.

The windows and balconies of the houses opposite are mostly filled with spectators of a better class.

A quarter of an hour has elapsed, and a bell within the fort begins to ring, slowly at first, but increasing in rapidity as the awful hour approaches, until it seems to ring in convulsions; then the sound of muffled drums announces the procession has been formed on the south side of the fort, and is now wending its way round the ramparts to the scene of execution.

First walk the criminals, in their shrouds, with the attendant missionary, who seems engaged in the fruitless task of striving to awaken them to a proper sense of their situation; then the troops with their arms reversed (misplaced sympathy!), as though they were following some brave warrior to his grave, rather than escorting a murderess and her accomplice to their well-merited doom.

There seems but little sympathy, however, on the part of the spectators in general. The man evinces every symptom of the most abject terror, and mounts, or rather is forced up, the ladder; the woman steps up with a bold look of defiance, and takes her place alongside the man with a jaunty air.

No sooner on the drop than the preparations are completed, the nooses are adjusted, and there is a momentary pause. The creaking sound of a rusty bolt, as though the executioner had some trouble in withdrawing it, strikes harshly upon the ear.

See! the woman has fainted! Her heart has failed her at the last, and she has fallen her full length on the scaffold.

Another short interval, and two bodies in their last convulsions are swaying to and fro in the breeze, where they are ordered to swing till sunset.

Sickened at the sight, my dinner was almost untouched; and as regards myself, even the evening cigar had lost its soothing powers.

Dusk had intervened; my fellow-lodger was absent, and I was seated alone at the open casement of our cottage, through which the moon already shed a ray of misty light. The quick ringing of the death-bell, the muffled drum, the creaking sound of the rusty bolt, the fainting form of the murderess, her hideous features—all were indelibly impressed on my mind.

I still thought I was gazing at the two bodies, swinging in mid-air; the fluttering of their grave-clothes in the wind again struck on my ear; when,

of a sudden, the breeze which had been fanning my face seemed obstructed—what remained of it, tainted—a shadow passed over the moon's misty ray, then stopped; the fluttering of the shrouds struck on my ear more vividly than ever. It seemed as if all the vermin in the cottage were creeping about my naked flesh.

I gave one glance at the open casement. Oh, horror! the murderess herself met me face to face; her glassy eyes staring at me, her hideous features rendered the more distinct by the pale moonlight, which, while it exaggerated them in size, tinged them with unearthly hue.

Well may you start, gentle reader. I must plead guilty of the same weakness! For one instant, all the stock of courage which we naval officers are supposed to have constantly at command deserted me. I was off like a shot, making a clean bolt through the door, fully persuaded the woman was close at my heels. A moment's reflection, however, in the cool air convinced me I was not suffering from the effects of a heated brain, and I turned into the road, where the mystery was at once solved, and a right good ghost story spoiled.

A glance at the cottage wall revealed the stiffened forms of the two murderers, while four natives were reposing by the roadside, apparently resting from recent labour.

It seemed that on these men had devolved the task of cutting down the bodies at sunset, and of carrying them to some place of burial outside the town, but they had deferred their task until a later hour. Our cottage happening to be in their line of march, they stood the two bodies against the wall while they rested themselves; the body of the woman, as it happened, having been placed immediately against the open casement.

But for this untoward investigation, as I before hinted, I should have found myself in possession of a first-rate ghost story, with a far better foundation than nine-tenths of those we hear of.

The reader will form his own judgment about the children's dreams. I have confined my narrative to the statement which was current at the time.

The Minister and the Teamster.

ONE of the members of the Methodist Conference recently held in Detroit, says the *Free Press*, was out for a walk at an early hour one morning, and encountered a strapping big fellow, who was drawing a waggon to the blacksmith's shop.

"Catch hold here, and help me down to the shop with this waggon, and I'll buy the whiskey," called the big fellow.

"I never drink," solemnly replied the good man.

"Well, you can take a cigar."

"I never smoke."

The man dropped the waggon tongue, looked hard at the member, and asked—

"Don't you chew?"

"No, sir," was the decided reply.

"You must get mighty lonesome," mused the teamster.

"I guess I'm all right—I feel first-rate."

"I'll bet you even that I can lay you on your back," remarked the teamster. "Come, now, let's warm up a little."

"I never bet."

"Well, let's take each other down for fun, then. You are as big as I am, and I'll give you the underhold."

"I never have fun," solemnly answered the member.

"Well, I'm going to tackle you, anyway. Here we go!"

The teamster slid up, and endeavoured to get a neck hold; but he only just commenced to fool about when he was lifted clear off the grass, and slammed against a tree box with such force that he gasped half a dozen times before he could get his breath.

"Now, you keep away from me," exclaimed the minister, picking up his cane.

"Bless me if I don't," replied the teamster, as he edged off. "What's the use in lying and saying that you didn't have any fun in you, when you're chock full of it? Blame it! you wanted to break my back, didn't you?"

Sebastopol as it Is.

A PRIVATE letter from Sebastopol contains the following:—

"Sebastopol now numbers no more than 9,000 inhabitants, who eke out a miserable existence amid their ruined city.

"The Malakoff and the Redan are in the condition in which the allies left them. The ground is so honeycombed by the effect of shot and mines as to offer great difficulties to the pedestrian. A number of guns are lying in the ditch, half embedded in the mud.

"The French trenches and approaches are still in such perfect condition that one might fancy the siege was a thing of yesterday.

"There are three cemeteries at Sebastopol. The Russian burial-ground stretches to the north of a large bay; it bears a sinister name—'The Cemetery of the Hundred Thousand.' Two captured guns stand on each side of the entrance. The tombs are all sheltered by evergreens, and well kept. They are simple; but there is something ennobling and refined in their architecture. The soldiers' graves are covered with slabs of granite. On each are engraved the words, 'Tombe Fraternelle.'

"The monument of Prince Gortschakoff bears the following inscription: 'He wished to rest surrounded by his fellow-soldiers, whose gallantry defended against the enemy the soil where rests their bones.'

"The French cemetery forms a park, planted with lilac and juniper trees. In the centre is a large structure with the following inscription: 'To the memory of the soldiers of the French army who fell before Sebastopol.' Marble tablets indicate that in the graves beneath this edifice lie the remains of Generals Bizot, Brunet, Mayzan, Lenormand, de Morolles, de Pecqueult, de Pouteves, de St. Poli, and Perrin. At spaces along the walls there is a chapel for each division of the French army. The

names of the officers buried here are inscribed in these chapels. There are upwards of one thousand names.

"As to the English cemetery, it is in such a state of neglect that I shall say nothing about it."

The New Jelly.

FROM old boots, sir, from old boots;

Who knows what next, as great science shoots
Such mighty branches from its deep tap roots,
While cooks make jelly out of worn old boots?

Recipe: Clean your boot, you must mind—no blacking;

The sole, too, of nails must be truly lacking;
Be careful to take out brown paper backing,
All brass eye-holes, and the wax-end tacking.

Next, a pot of hot water, and a deal of leisure;
The leather's tough, put it under pressure;
One ounce of soda in the saucepan measure,
Then watch and wait as you cook your treasure.

Be careful next, as your water's boiling,
It don't boil too fast, or in vain your toiling;
Boil it like old boots, you're the jelly spoiling,
But take your time: 's a mould you're oiling.

Now to describe what takes place in the pot:
The tannic acid in tanned leather hot
Combines with the soda upon the spot,
And tannate of soda you get a lot.

That's not the jelly, but that you've seen;
The strange salt lies where the boots have been;
While right to the surface, a yellowy green,
There rises in freedom fair gelatine.

Your gelatine flavour with sugar and wine,
Pour in a mould if you've friends to dine;
Use Wellingtons, Bluchers, as you incline,
In beautiful jelly you're sure to shine.

Out in the Desert.

WHAT next?" said my friend, Fred Norris, as we sat one morning outside our tent door, smoking that pleasant cigar which follows the breakfast.

"What next?" I said, lazily. "Oh, anything you like!"

"Like?" he said. "I should like to go farther south, and get in for some large game. Here, Said, how far should we have to go south to get amongst the lions?"

Said was our brown factotum, an Algerian, who could set up a tent, take it down, light a fire, and keep it burning on next to nothing, and then cook our dinner—when there was anything to cook.

The fact was that, with plenty of arms and ammunition, Fred Norris and I had taken a trip to Algeria, with the intention of having a couple of months' shooting. We had engaged Said, who had been recommended to us as a very useful fellow, and so we had found him; but his greatest drawback was that he looked upon Englishmen and Frenchmen as people of the same breed; and the smattering of European tongues which he had picked

up was a strange jumble of Gallic and Anglo-Saxon, and this, being spiced with his own Moorish dialect, made something awful to listen to—impossible to comprehend.

For instance, the first time I met him, he smiled, showed a magnificent set of teeth, and exclaimed—

"Ah—Sid—ya—rayona—portez—bien—eat—nice—come—along—okba."

This was, of course, very encouraging, and I smiled and nodded in return; but what the fellow meant I have not the slightest idea, neither do I believe had he.

When I talked to Fred Norris about it, he said it was a good job too; for we didn't want a fellow to talk, but to act.

"Very well," I said. "You'll have to do the interpreting. I wash my hands of it."

"Wash your hands in it if you like, my dear boy," he said. "Good thing if you can, for water will be very scarce where we are going."

"But how the dickens are we to make the fellow understand what we want?"

"Tell him," said Fred.

"Yes, that's all very fine," I replied; "but suppose he can't comprehend—what then?"

"Kick him," said Fred. "Always acts. I don't care what a fellow was, whether a Patagonian or a Chinese, if you wanted your boots cleaned, pointed at them, and then kicked him, he'd understand."

I gave way, and we started, having a very pleasant trip in the beautiful region which borders the Mediterranean Sea. And somehow or another, but without the kicking, Said managed to comprehend all our wants; and even if he had not, as Fred said, he was such a sublime cook, that he deserved forgiveness of all his shortcomings for the way in which he catered for the *bureau de l'intérieur*, as we called it.

Fancy, you know, after a long, hot day's ride, with a heavy double-barrelled rifle, with ammunition to match, returning to the tent, to find it pitched in the shade of a clump of palms, a little glowing fire close at hand, sheltered by rocks and stones, and on wooden skewers, growing temptingly brown, and looking deliciously juicy, either a dozen or two of gazelle kabobs, or half as many quails, spitting and sputtering, and asking to be eaten.

If you wish to know what an appetite is, go and hunt and shoot on the slope of the Atlas Mountains, where the Mediterranean breezes play; then ride back to camp, and partake of roast quail, such as Said could cook, and wash all down with cups of the most delicious freshly roasted coffee: for we drank neither wine nor spirit in that hot region of Africa.

Ah, that coffee! I have never tasted such anywhere since. We used to carry a bag of it with us, on a mule, with the rest of our paraphernalia, and some of these green berries Said used to put in a small iron pot with a cover. Then, when the fire at our halting place was in a good glow, this pot used to be thrown on the embers, and turned and turned according to Said's ideas, and at last, when he opened it, the odour of the freshly roasted coffee was delicious.

Well, as I have said, we had been enjoying a spler-

did month's hunting and shooting, our horses were as fresh as on the day when we started, and the only drawback we felt was that we had got tired of hunting small game, and wanted to have a shot at something large. Hence Fred's demands about the lions.

What Said said in reply I have never to this day been able to make out; but he understood, nevertheless, for the next time he packed up and loaded his mules, he turned their noses due south, and for the next few days we made tracks in that direction.

"I don't believe we shall get a shot at a lion," said Fred.

"I feel pretty sure we shall not," I said, quietly.

"Then what's the good of going on?" he said.

"Travel—adventure—game—sport. We may meet with something else, if we don't meet a lion," I replied. "What do you say to a respectable hyæna?"

"Let him laugh," said Fred, grimly.

"Or a leopard, or a large deer?"

"Anything you like," he said.

And so on we went, through the beautiful sunny land, which, however, grew now more monotonous and dense at every footstep.

We had halted for a short rest in a pleasant little ravine, where there was a spring of pure water, and an abundance of grass; and so, for the sake of the horses, here we stayed for a couple of days, during which Fred had more than once expressed his desire, next to encountering a lion, to meet with some of the Kabyles—the Children of the Desert.

"They might turn nasty with us," I said, "and say we were necessary for the soil."

"Necessary for the soil?"

"Yes; want us to improve it—kill us," I replied.

"Bah!—pish!—bosh!" exclaimed Fred; "I don't believe those stories about the ferocity of the Arab of the Desert."

At the break of the third day, we limbered up, Said, smiling and good-tempered, having done his part of the business, and prepared us a cup of coffee into the bargain. Our horses were refreshed by the rest, and as we mounted them, and they sniffed the clear, fresh mountain air, it needed no few touches of the curb to keep them within bounds, so eager were they to be off for a long, swinging gallop.

We now, as we issued from our sheltered little valley, found ourselves entering really upon the Desert; for rocks were around, sand and stones beneath our horses' feet; the last palms were being left behind, and they stood up clear and bright against the mellow morning skies, their great feathery leaves seeming like plumes of golden green, illumined as they were by the rays of the setting sun.

Half an hour before, there had been a refreshing coolness in the mountain air; but no sooner was the sun above the horizon than we began to feel its power, and remembered that we were in Africa. A pleasant glow pervaded our frames, but, at the same time, we knew that before many hours had passed the golden arrows would come darting down from overhead with power enough to pierce the skin, and burn it as if with a hot iron. Let those who have felt the sunbeams of our hot summers imagine what it must be in Africa, where the rays are reflected from dry, glistening rock and barren sand.

After a long ride, during which we had not seen either feather or hoof, the only living creature being a kind of lizard, which had scuffled over the parched rocks, we drew up at last by a clump of palms, which stood up, a very oasis in the desert, over a few bushes which half concealed a pleasant little watercourse, which rose from among the rocks, and babbled along for a short time before it became lost in the sand.

"Let's wait till Said comes up," I said, for he was a few hundred yards behind; and there we sat motionless upon our horses, looking at the wilderness, with its stubby, strange vegetation around, and wondered whether the rocks and hillocks of sand on our left concealed game.

"Good place this for lions," said Fred.

"Or gazelles," I replied.

And then we were silent, for our voices had seemed to startle the solitude around.

Just then Said came up smiling and patient with his mules, and allowed them to drink at the clear, pure watercourse, an opportunity of which the animals freely availed themselves.

Suddenly our horses raised their heads and snorted, pricked their ears, and from behind a hillock of sand a gazelle bounded into sight, going like the very wind as it cleared broken stones, the brook, and darted on with strained eyes for its life.

My first act was to cock my rifle, and bring it to bear. Fred did the same. But before we could take aim the gazelle was out of reach, and we had been startled by the appearance of a couple of magnificent dogs, built like our own greyhounds, but stronger, more steady, and decidedly less sleek. We just had time to see that they were of a dun-brown, with white breasts and black muzzles, as they dashed on, when after them came a true Son of the Desert in white burnouse, riding with short stirrup a splendid grey Arab horse, which, however, was disfigured by its ugly saddle and hideous bridle, with—of all things in the world for a saddle horse—blinkers.

The Kabyle rode splendidly, though self and horse seemed to make but one as they cleared the watercourse and bounded on, *ventre à terre*, like the hounds.

On seeing us the horseman did not draw bridle, but uttered a wild halloo—shouted out some words in his own tongue, and drew a pistol from his girdle.

At first I thought he was going to fire at us, and prepared for a reply; but, on the contrary, he raised the weapon far above his head, and fired right in the air.

All this took but a few moments, and then he was gone.

So rapidly had it taken place, that I looked at Fred, and he stared at me, the same question being in each of our eyes—"Is this a dream?"

"Quick, vite—ahah! ahah!" shouted Said. "He call—go hunt dog—quick—ketchem, ketchem—*les attrape!*"

It was not very easy to understand, but his pointing hand said plainly "After the dogs!" and we gave our horses the rein.

Quickly as we started, and were going at full

gallop in chase of the horseman and his dogs, he had got so far ahead with his magnificent grey Arab, that we despaired of getting up in time to assist at the taking of the gazelle; when the quarry, finding the dogs gaining upon it, turned off sharply to the right, and, describing almost a semicircle, tried to reach the shelter of the wood, where it would be more likely to baffle its pursuers. As soon as we perceived its object, however, we crossed the semicircle at a right angle, thus once more nearing our game; and then began the most exciting chase we had any of us ever enjoyed.

After half an hour's desperate gallop in the midst of a perfect hail of pebbles, kicked up by our horses' feet, the gazelle tried to clear at a bound the river at the edge of which it had been tranquilly drinking only a short time before; but the dogs took the spring at the same instant, and before the animal touched the opposite bank, it was seized by throat and legs by the vice-like jaws of its enemies, and lay the next instant panting on the ground, while we wiped the perspiration from our foreheads as we grouped in triumph round our fallen prey.

Of course we were all proud of our achievement, and bestowed no little praise upon the dogs, which had proved themselves such valuable aids; but we were, now that our object was attained, quite tired enough to make us gladly accept our new friend's hearty invitation to rest ourselves, and have a comfortable meal under his hospitable roof, where I can honestly affirm that we did ample justice to the provisions set before us.

Among the Icebergs.

CHAPTER VII.

I KNEW it had not, neither was my next act kind, for I started from him with a feeling of horror that must have been visible in my face. I felt obliged to do it, and I held out my hands to keep him off; while as he tried to take them, I snatched them away, and retreated behind Mr. Moore for protection.

He must have read it all in an instant, for his face turned black and malignant, and even then I felt that I was sorry for him; though the next moment I was angry at the cruel, bitter words he uttered, in the passionate burst of rage that swept through his frame.

"You'll rue this, Jessie—you'll rue this," he cried. "I can see it all now. But I tell you this—he's dead, curse him, he's dead! But could he by any possibility have escaped, you should never be his wife. I tell you—"

"Stephen Ellerby," exclaimed Mr. Moore, stepping forward, "this is cruel, sir—cruelty made worse by cowardice. You forget yourself, to speak like this to a lady."

"A lady!" sneered Stephen Ellerby, with a fierceness and brutality that made me shrink from him—"a lady!—a beggar, and the child of bankrupt beggars, whom I would have kept from the workhouse, and taken upon me as an encumbrance for her sake. A lady! Why—"

"I insist, sir—I desire that there shall be no more of this. You have intruded here. This is my private room. Now leave!"

Mr. Moore seemed to grow young in his anger, as he stepped forward and confronted Stephen, and pointed to the door.

For a moment I thought that, in his rage, Stephen would have struck the old man. His hand was once half raised, but he dropped it directly; and then, with a half sneering, contemptuous smile, he took a step aside, but only to turn back to me.

"This is perhaps no time for discussing the wrong you have done me, Miss Wynne," he said. "I will say no more now; but recollect this, the day shall come when it will be your turn to appeal—when you shall ask me to take you for their sake. You know, I suppose, what you are doing, and to what you are condemning them; but of course you had well considered all that. I have taken the part of the humble petitioner long enough, and with the result that you have imposed upon my weakness. Indignation now forces me to speak. I need say no more, though; for did I wish for this revenge, I might lie down in peace, since I am perfectly sure that it will come."

I stood looking towards the door through which he had hurriedly passed out, feeling more now than ever the step that I had taken. I had, I knew, been selfish, and studied my own feelings, heedless of what was to happen to those who had looked to me to be their stay in their old age. It was a trying time; and for a few minutes I felt that Stephen Ellerby's revenge had come at once, and that, did I do my duty, I should call him back, and ask him for their sake to forgive me.

The next moment, though, I was able to think that it was not all selfishness, for, with a strange sense of joy in my breast, I seemed to see once more, right before me, that sad, imploring face turned towards me—those hands stretched out; and was brave again on the instant, for he called on me for help.

"He's a coward," exclaimed Mr. Moore, and his words startled me in their suddenness. "He had no business to speak like that. His poor father, my old partner for twenty years, would have been above it; and as for this fellow—I'm ashamed of him. But let that go, little one; and now take my advice, and go home quietly, and don't think about this any more for a few days. In the meantime, I'll see what can be done."

"Oh, Mr. Moore," I exclaimed, "if some one dear to you were drowning, and a friend told you not to trouble about it, but to wait a few days—what would you say?"

"Bless the girl! You're too much for me," cried the old man. "But is he then very dear to you, and is this the meaning of it all about Stephen Ellerby? Well, well, don't take on like that—I see—I see. I was young once myself."

But I could not restrain my feelings, and falling at his knees, I buried my face in my hands, and for a while the tears had their way, till the violence of my sobs quite alarmed him.

"There, there, there, my dear child," cried Mr. Moore, "only tell me, and I'll do anything."

My tears were dried in an instant, and I was looking up in his face.

"He must be found, Mr. Moore," I said.

"But my dear child—how?"

"How?" I cried; "do you ask me how? Are there not good men and true enough in Hull to go out and try and save their brothers in distress—to save them from a horrible death?"

"But, my darling child, we don't know that they are still alive."

"We do—we do," I cried. "I have told you they are. I have seen Captain Grant asking me for help, and they are waiting till we send up there amongst the ice—*there!*"

I don't know how it was, but as I stood there I pointed with my outstretched arm, something seeming the while to turn me slowly till my hand pointed in quite another direction, and there it remained perfectly still.

"Nor-nor-west," said Mr. Moore, looking at me in a curious, half-troubled, startled way. "Why, little woman, only that we have no such things nowadays, I'd say you were a prophetess. But look here, my child, where do you suppose they are?"

"Frozen up—closed in, and helpless—toiling hard to keep body and soul together till we go to their help."

Those words seemed to pass from my lips without my having anything to do with it; and they were spoken in a firm, convincing way that had their effect on Mr. Moore, for he cried, excitedly—

"Then, Jessie, there *are* men in Hull who will try and save them—good men and true, too, as you shall find."

"Then you will try to help me?" I cried.

"I will, my little lass—I will; though how I don't know yet. How are we to fit out a ship?"

"Don't the *Ice Blink* sail in a few days, sir, please?" said Ann, whom we had as good as forgotten.

"Yes, my girl, our old tub goes off next week; but she's going—There, why not?" he cried, striking the table. "Why, you women have the sharpest heads, after all. They shall go for their voyage and the search too, and God speed them."

"Not with my consent," cried a voice.

And Stephen Ellerby stepped in, and closed the door after him.

"Then, damme, sir, she shall with mine!" cried Mr. Moore, excitedly. "I'm senior partner, though my name is last, Master Stephen; and your father left everything in my hands. How dare you stand and listen? Matters are in my hands."

"But not to play the madman," retorted Stephen.

"I'd blush for myself, Stephen Ellerby," cried Mr. Moore. "You're no son of your father. You stand there and play the eavesdropper, and then come in here to take advantage of it. I'm an old, white-headed man now, but it has pleased God to make me rich in money, if I have neither chick nor child; and I know no better way of spending a few hundreds—aye, or thousands, if you come to that—than in trying to save the lives of our brethren in distress. Jessie, my child, God helping me, I'm with you in this. There's something in what you

say. You've won me over; and if they live we'll find them, even if we go ourselves."

I did not see Stephen Ellerby's face, for my arms were the next moment round Mr. Moore's neck, and I was sobbing upon his breast; but, oh, such happy, joyful tears! They seemed to soothe and lighten me till, irreverent though it may sound, I felt, and I told myself I felt, like that poor simple pilgrim whose burden had fallen from him; and whatever troubles were before me, I knew that I should persevere boldly to the end.

I was startled a few minutes after by feeling my hand taken and kissed, and hot tears were falling upon it, when, with a shudder, I tried to snatch it away; but the next moment I let it stay in the rough, staunch palms which held it, for it was only Ann who had taken hold of my poor little weak fingers, to kiss them again and again.

"Business," cried Mr. Moore, suddenly; and he led me to a chair. "No more tears, my little one, unless you mean to use them to melt the ice. Oh! he's gone," he said, seeing the direction of my eyes, "and there are no listeners now. But first of all, a glass of wine."

I protested, but it was in vain; and he fetched a decanter and glasses from a cellaret, filling three, and proposing success to our enterprise.

"Half an hour ago, Jessie, and I should have called myself a madman to have thought of such a thing; but you've converted me, my little prophetess, and I shall not run back."

"I do not fear that," I said, quietly. "But now, what do you propose to do first? How can you arrange for us to go?"

"To do first—arrange for us to go?" he faltered.

"Yes," I said; "are we to go in the *Ice Blink*?"

"We to go?"

"You said we would seek for him ourselves."

"My little lass—my little lass," he cried, jumping up, and looking at me, "have you gone daft?—has trouble driven you mad? If so, be honest, and tell me at once, and it will save me trouble."

"No, dear Mr. Moore," I said, quietly, "I am not mad; but I love poor Mark Grant very dearly, and I will go round the wide world to find him."

"And so will I—so will I, Miss Jessie, to find some one else," cried Ann, half crying the while. "I'll never leave you, miss, and if the world was ten hundred thousand times as big, we'd find 'em before we'd done."

"Mad!—stick, stark, staring mad, both of 'em!" cried Mr. Moore. "Why, you silly children, what are you thinking about?—it's impossible."

"Taint, sir," cried Ann, stoutly. "Do you mean to tell me it's impossible for me to go with a crew of good true men to find my poor John, whose heart I most broke before he went away? and him going sailing up into the cold north seas, so as to make money to get a few bits of things together to make me a comfortable home, and me all the while throwing dirt in his face. I thought he was dead, but he's alive, for Miss Jessie saw him; and as I am to die some time or other, why shouldn't it be in trying to save poor John?"

"Mad as mad!" said Mr. Moore again, in a loud

voice, as if to himself; and he stood staring in the most perplexed way imaginable.

"No, dear Mr. Moore, not mad," I said, going and taking his hand; "though our words may seem rather wild. It would not be the first time that women have done work that seems to appertain only to men. Look at Grace Darling."

"Grace Darling be damned—there, I can't help it," he said, rubbing his chin viciously; "you make me cross. Grace Darling was a great sea cow of a fisherman's daughter, who could row like bow oar in a whale boat; while you are a delicate little chick of a thing."

"But with a heart as stout, perhaps, as any woman that ever breathed."

"And ever so much stouter, too, sir," cried Ann, "or she'd never have stood out against them on that wedding day as she did, and so I tell you, sir."

"Hold your tongue, wench! How dare you talk like that? Why, you are making her ten times worse than she was before. Don't you see, or haven't you even common sense enough to see, that such a thing is impossible? Why, stout men can hardly stand it. When I said, 'We'll go,' I was talking big; but of course, I didn't mean it. Now, look here, I'm not cross, only you're both trying hard to make me, for you're acting like a couple of little fools—not that that's anything, for all girls in love are fools; and though one of you is a lady and the other a servant, I suppose education makes no difference, for Mother Nature only had one kind of stuff out of which she made hearts. But now listen to me—but will you?"

"Dear Mr. Moore," I said, "indeed, we will try and take your advice."

"We, eh? It's to be we, then, is it? Very good. Then, look here. Go home now, both of you, and wait."

"Wait?" I said, despairingly.

"Yes, wait. A ship can't sail in a minute, and help sent in haste will be valueless."

"I will try and do as you say," I faltered.

"You must, my child."

"But how long am I to wait?" I said.

"Well, say till to-morrow morning; and between now and then I'll see old Pash, and hear what he thinks."

"Captain Pash of the *Ice Blink*?" I exclaimed.

"Right, and one or two more; and we'll have a pipe together, and see what's to be done."

"But might I not come back to-night?"

"No, no, no," he exclaimed; and then he turned to Ann. "Ann, now look here, you; I'm not cross with you—not a bit, I like a woman to be a trump, and you've shown that you are one; but all I've got to say to you is, that if your John, or Jack, or whatever his name is, should turn up, he's welcome to you, for I've heard a saying about the grey mare being the better horse. Now take your young mistress and go."

The old gentleman was speaking very roughly to us now; but I saw there was a tear twinkling in his eye before I went up to him, and kissed him, and said "Good-bye," feeling hopeful that I was upon the right track.

CHAPTER VIII.

I WENT to my rest that night feeling certain that I should lie awake till morning. All was soon still in the house. My father and then mamma came and said "Good night;" but it was in a cold, sad way, that made my heart ache; and then Ann had tapped to know if she might come in, to kneel down by my bedside for a time, kissing and fondling my hand, as she begged of me to keep firm and hold to my resolve.

"Don't give way an inch, Miss Jessie, please—please don't. If you'll only try hard, you'll keep Mr. Moore to it, and he'll send the ship, and they'll be found. And you will be strong?"

"I will, Ann," I said, quietly; for the feeling was growing upon me that I should be weak and tearful no more.

"I know you will, my own darling Miss Jessie," she cried.

And then, holding my hand to her breast as she knelt, she rested her forehead upon my arm, and I could tell that her lips were moving and her heart humbly asking help and guidance in that which was before us. My own heart, too, joined in the same prayer; and so fully an hour passed, when Ann rose from her knees, and without a word stole softly away, the door closed gently after her, and I was alone, prepared for the fight, listening to the gentle "tick-tick" made by some spider behind the wainscot of the old house; and then, as I half shuddered, and thought of the old stories of the death-watch and its ominous forebodings, the noise grew fainter—fainter, and the next sound I heard was the striking of the great clock at the old church, and I started up in bed to count seven, for it was a bright sunshiny morning, and I had slept soundly through the night.

I rose, feeling half ashamed that I should have been so lightly impressed by the thoughts of those awaiting our coming—for the certainty of their existence seemed to grow upon me each hour, and I never dreamed now of admitting a doubt—that I had slept soundly. I could not see then how necessary was the rest to prepare me to act firmly my part.

Ann brought me my breakfast, and about ten we went down together to Mr. Moore's office. We were not half-way there, though, before I saw Stephen Ellerby coming, and for a moment I was for turning back, to run if it were necessary; but I mastered the inclination, recalling, as I did, how necessary it was that I should now be strong; and, tightly holding Ann's arm, I walked firmly on, though my heart sank as we neared him whom I now looked upon with perfect horror.

I was called upon to suffer no further ordeal, though; for he merely looked hard at me, raised his hat, and passed; and but for the catching of my breath during the next few minutes, the encounter might not have taken place.

We entered the old, dark house in the High-street, to find the outer office full of rough, seafaring men, one and all ready, though, to pull the front part of their hair, and to make a sort of duck-down as we entered, while, to make room for us to pass to the inner office, there was a regular blundering of

one against the other, the pushing down of a stool, and the sweeping off from a desk of a bright pewter inkstand, some of the ink splashing up on to my light dress.

"Lor, miss, I ax your pardon," said a gruff voice, which came from a very heavy-looking man, whose face was nearly all coarse, dark hair. "They didn't ought to leave these here paint-tins about, though, without lashings."

I heard a tittering amongst the clerks as I said it did not matter; and the next minute we were shown into Mr. Moore's room, where a couple of stout, heavy men were seated, each with a large tumbler of something hot before him, while a large case bottle was upon the table.

"Good morning, my dear," said Mr. Moore, pleasantly. "This is Captain Pash, and this is Mr. Solly, our mate of the *Ice Blink*."

"Sarvent, miss. How are you?" said the captain.

And he held out a great hand, which hid my poor little fingers for a few moments as he crushed them terribly, and then passed them to his mate, as if they had been something quite disconnected with my arm. The mate, though, was a little more merciful; and when the introduction was over, Mr. Moore placed a chair for me.

"Sit down there, my child," he said, kindly. "And you stand behind her chair there, my wench," he continued to Ann. Then, turning to the captain, "Well, Mr. Pash—"

"Capen Pash, if you please, sir."

"Captain—I beg your pardon," said Mr. Moore. "I think now we might as well have the men in, and let them hear what we have to say."

Captain Pash nodded, stirred his tumbler, rose, and in a heavy way handed it to me.

"Don't say no, miss; take a sup."

I of course declined, as did Ann, when the mate imitated his leader; but I did it as mildly as I could, for the act was kindly meant, and I was looking to these poor men to befriend me in my sore strait.

"We've been chatting the matter over, my dear," said Mr. Moore, halting for a minute before summoning the men from the outer office, and kindly trying to make me see that things were in progress. "Both Captain Pash and Mr. Solly think that something might be done, and— But there, we will have in the men."

I glanced gratefully from one to the other, to receive from each in turn a series of encouraging nods—encouraging, indeed, for each look whispered hope to my heart.

The next moment, the men were shouldering one another through the door, all apparently striving for the honourable post of last man; and then, as they hung or clustered together close by the door, hitching their clothes about, and smoothing down their hair, they struck me as being as uncouth a flock of sea-sheep as I had ever seen; but I did not know them then.

"Shall I be spokesman, Captain Pash?" said Mr. Moore.

"Surely," was the growled reply.

And Mr. Moore was about to begin, when there was a sounding blow, and one of the men—a young

fellow barely twenty—staggered forward, and nearly knocked down one of the glasses of rum and water.

"What's up, Brunyee?" growled Mr. Solly, the mate, to the very hairy-faced, elderly sailor, who afterwards proved to be the boatswain.

"Fouling the deck," was the reply. "Take that there quid out, or else stand on the mat, will yer? Don't yer see as there's ladies aboard?"

The young man rubbed his ear, scowled, and then, glancing round at his companions, did as they did—let his face expand into a broad grin.

"Well, now then to business," said Mr. Moore, smiling. "Look here, my men."

There was a general shuffle, evidently indicative of attention, and Ann afterwards told me that two or three of the men behind furtively removed tobacco from their mouths.

"I have already explained to Captain Pash and Mr. Solly why you are called together, and now I wish for you to know."

"Ay, ay, sir," said the hairy-faced man, in a deep bellow; and then, turning half-round to the others—"Now, then, bear a hand with your ears, all on yer. Going to give us the sailing orders."

"You all know how the *Dawn*, Mr. Wynne's ship, sailed three years ago?"

"And never spoke after," growled the boatswain. "D'yer hear? *Dawn* sailed and never spoke!"

There was a low, murmuring growl of assent from the men, and Mr. Moore continued—

"Well, my lads, there are those on board who are very dear to this lady, and—"

"Ay, ay, sir—dear to these here ladies, as is the lasses they left behind 'em. D'y'e hear, there?"

Again came the assenting growl, and again Mr. Moore continued—

"And we think that if the *Ice Blink* was extra-provisioned, and a store of extras taken, you might do as you'd like to be done by, my lads, push up a bit more to the north, and try hard, like true British tars, to find out where your mates are frozen up. Now, that's putting it in few words. What do you say?"

"Ay, ay—putting it in few words," growled the boatswain. "What do you say?"

What would have been the effect of Mr. Moore's terse speech without the boatswain's rough interpretation, it is impossible to say; but now the men burst into a hearty "Hooray!" and the young sailor threw his cap up to the ceiling, so that it came down neatly, extinguisher-wise, over the mate's spirits and water, to be at once taken off and thrown where would have been the fire had it been a cold day.

"By that, then, I suppose you are all ready to please the lady here, and do your best in the search—eh, my lads?" said Mr. Moore.

"Best in the search—eh, my lads?" growled the boatswain. "Why, I'll answer for 'em, sir. I know what they all think, every man Jack of 'em, a plaguey sight better than they know themselves. I'll say, we will, sir, all on us, to please the ladies; and if they've got froze up, why we'll find 'em, if you'll only give us time. That's what you all think, aint it?"

There was another growl of assent, and a great deal of shouldering about.

"Then why don't you say so?" exclaimed the boatswain. "I never see such a set o' babbies in my life."

"Very good, then," said Mr. Moore; "and now for terms. Of course you will all be paid as usual; but in addition you shall have five pounds a month per man; and my young friend here will give a hundred pounds to the man who first sets eyes on Captain Grant, of the *Dawn*."

"Ay, ay, sir—hundred pound to him as first finds Capen Mark Grant, of the *Dawn*. D'yer hear?"

The growl followed, of course; and before it was ended, the rough old boatswain was standing with his great, rough hand clasped in both mine, for he had exclaimed, heartily—

"And the hundred pound may go to limbo for me, for I'd sooner set eyes on that dear lad than all the gold in the Bank of England."

"Did you know him, then?" I asked.

"Know him, my pretty!—why, wasn't I the first to show him the difference between a taggle and a fid, when he wasn't no higher than that there chimney-piece? But, there, don't you be down-hearted, my dear—we'll find him out, and bring him back to his own true love—eh, my lads?"

I could not speak then, when the men gave a loud cheer; I dared not try, lest I should break down when I wanted to be firm and brave; and then Mr. Moore spoke again.

"Well, then, my lads, I see we understand one another, and all we have to do is to put to sea a week earlier, and as soon as Captain Pash here can get in such stores as will be necessary. But, mind this—do your best for us, as we are going to do the best for you. Flannels and sealskins, and everything in the shape of abundant provisions, shall be stowed on board; and, besides that, I'm going to try if I can't get a doctor to volunteer and go with you—to keep you all well up to the mark, so that you may set frost-bite and scurvy at defiance. As for your ship—"

"As good a boat as ever sailed out of the port of Hull," said Captain Pash.

"Hear, hear," said the mate.

"As for your ship, she shall be found in everything in the shape of new gear, and ice anchors, spare spars and sails—whatever Captain Pash or Mr. Solly thinks necessary, there it is; so that I want you to see that there is every wish on our part to send you well prepared, and in return we ask you to be brave and earnest, and ready to dare a few dangers."

"Hooray!" shouted the men, in a way that was almost seafaring.

And then, with beating heart, I saw that Mr. Moore was about to open the door, when I took a step forward, and said, loudly—

"Stop."

"My dear child," said Mr. Moore, nervously, "are you not satisfied?"

"No," I said, firmly. "You have not told them all."

"Aint told us all—d'yer hear that?" growled the boatswain.

"You have not told Captain Pash and these brave fellows that they will have two women passengers

—that I and my servant go with them upon the search."

"Hear, hear, hear!" cried Mr. Solly, tapping his empty glass loudly with the spoon.

And I saw that the men were crowding forward to hear my words; but all the time I seemed to feel that those appealing eyes were directed full at me, and those hands were stretched out to me from the ice; and with that sense upon me I was ready to dare anything.

"But, my dear child, be reasonable," said Mr. Moore, earnestly. "We've now done all that was possible."

"You have done much, dear Mr. Moore," I said; "but not all. We must go."

"It is absolutely impossible, my child."

"Well, I don't know so much about that," said Captain Pash. "Why can't the young lady go, if she likes?"

"My dear Mr. Pash—"

"Capen Pash, if you please, sir."

"My dear Captain Pash, think of the perils, the intense cold—"

"There, Lord bless you, Mr. Moore! You let her alone; and if she likes to go, why I'll be like a father to her. Why, look here, I'll tell you what I'll do—I'll make that cabin a regular little heaven for her, with the best of fires. And that aint all; I'll do something else. I'll take my missus. She's often been hankering after going with me; but I've held back on account of the oil. I will take her, and that will make it all snug and nice for the young lady as can be. We're only rough and plain-spoken people—whalers' capens aint univarsity men, my dear; but we'll take care of you, though. For the matter of that, there aint a man here as won't do his best to bring both of 'em back safe and sound. Eh, Brunyee?"

"Ah, bring the young ladies back safe and sound, won't yer?" growled the boatswain.

And once more there was an answering growl.

"Do you hear, too, you Deaf Burke?" cried the boatswain.

A very surly-looking sailor, whom I had not before noticed, nodded his head, and then subsided, so that I could only see a part of his shock grisly head; but I fancied that I heard him muttering.

"But I cannot sanction such a proceeding, under any circumstances," exclaimed Mr. Moore; and he looked appealingly at me.

"I would not send these brave fellows where I dare not go myself," said I.

And the mate again beat his tumbler with his spoon.

"If the young ladies like to go," said the boatswain, "why, let 'em, sir. The capen says he'll make things right for 'em, and here's Mr. Solly wants 'em to go, or else he wouldn't leather his glass; and I should like 'em to go; and as for the lads here, they're all a-wanting of them to go. You'd like the ladies to go, wouldn't you, my lads, eh?"

This time there was a regular shouting from every throat, and Mr. Moore, being so strongly in the minority, said no more by way of opposition before the men; but calling the boatswain aside, placed some money in his hand, before saying aloud—

"Now, my lads, go and have a glass of grog round, and drink success to your voyage. And now, God bless you all! Good-bye."

Five minutes after, the captain and mate shook hands, and Ann and I were alone with our friend.

The Egotist's Note-book.

THE ninth section of the German official account of the Franco-German war, which has just been published, deals principally with the investment of Metz; and the conduct of Marshal Bazaine, from a military point of view, is very severely criticised. The year after the war, I happened to be staying at the hotel in Metz at which the marshal was in the habit of consulting with his officers daily, and I was assured, by trustworthy persons, that the officers frequently implored the marshal, upon their knees, to allow them to go out and fight the Germans, urging that it was better to die with their swords in their hands than of starvation inside the fortress. The marshal was deaf to all entreaty; and there can now be little doubt that it was political ambition that induced him to allow 60,000 Germans to shut him and his army of 120,000 men up in a fortress until it was impossible for him to effect his escape.

The *Times* says that "Sir Henry Hawkins was *inadvertently* styled Baron Hawkins instead of Mr. Justice Hawkins on the occasion of his receiving the honour of knighthood from her Majesty." Well, if it was "*inadvertently*" done, we won't say anything more about it—or of the Queen's English, which the *Times* endeavours to improve.

As Christmas Day this year falls on a Monday, the gossips are quoting the old rhymes which, it is asserted, were found in one of the Harleian MSS., as follows:—

"If Christmas Day on Monday be,
A great winter that year you'll see,
And full of winds, both loud and still;
But in summer, truth to tell,
High winds shall there be, and strong,
Full of tempests lasting long;
While battles they shall multiply,
And great plenty of beasts shall die.
They that be born that day, I ween,
They shall be strong each one and keen;
He shall be found that stealth aught;
Tho' thou be sick, thou diest not."

We are already getting the "winds both loud and shrill," the Russians intend to furnish the "battles," and all that will be required to fulfil the prophecy will be the rinderpest!

The Rev. Arthur Tooth, Vicar of St. James's, Hatcham, seems to have been born about three centuries behind his time. Having been inhibited for persistence in Ritualistic practices, he entered his pulpit one Sunday morning, and read to his parishioners a declaration concluding as follows:—"And I implore them"—his parishioners—"and, if needs be, require and charge them, to bear steadfastly in mind that all ministrations and discharge other than my own are *schismatical*, and are an invasion of the

rights of the Church of England." This is incisive on Mr. Tooth's part; but will the Bishop of Rochester be frightened at being called a schismatic?

Here is a strange advertisement:—

HARPER TWELVETREES' VILLA WASHER, WRINGER, and MANGLER (three machines in one), washes forty articles in four minutes. A most wonderful machine.

No doubt of it. Of course it's a wonderful machine; but is it meant to wash villas inside or out? Does it clean the windows, and do the doorstep, and will it sweep the front? If it will, I mean to have one. May I suggest to the manufacturer an improvement for the winter? Make the villa washer to clear away the snow, to the confusion of those boys who bore us at the first fall.

"Ye gods, what havoc doth ambition make among your works!" Here is a pauper, hight Benjamin Gibbs, brought before the magistrate at Wandsworth, charged with tearing up his clothes, and he pleads in his defence that the clothes were not good enough for him, and modestly requests that a suit shall be made for him by the Prince of Wales's tailor! Wouldn't he also like to exchange the casual ward for rooms at Marlborough House, or at Buckingham Palace?—seeing that the latter is unoccupied.

This will interest lady readers with matrimonial intentions. How would they like to be advertised like this instead of being "asked in church"?

ASKINGS.—KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS THAT—

1. The Merchant, GEORGE BARNARD DENNIS (unmarried), residing in London, Snaresbrook, son of the late landholder, John Dennis, at last residing in Great Holland (county of Essex), and his wife Margaret, née Blyth, residing in Oakley, near Harwich.

2. And TOMMA MARGARETHA LOUISE ZITTING (unmarried), residing in Bremen (Germany), daughter of the merchant Johann Anton Hermann Zitting, and his wife, Marie Caroline Charlotte, née Bacmeaster, both residing in Bremen, intend to SOLEMNIZE a MARRIAGE between them.

The Askings must be published in the parishes of Bremen and London.

Any obstacle or opposition to this marriage may be notified to the undersigned within 14 days after the publication.

The Civil Officer, SCHMIDT.

Bremen, this 25th November, 1876.

Now that winter has come, and ladies are looking forward to many a pleasant evening spent in the enjoyment of the dance, they often forget the attendant fatigue, until the exhaustion of the following day reminds them that every pleasure has its alloy. This fatigue is in great measure produced by the tight ligature or garter with which the stockings are fastened, hindering the free circulation of the blood. Medical men are unanimous in declaring the use of garters to be a most fruitful source of disease. Every lady desiring health and comfort should at once provide herself with a pair of the new patent stocking suspenders, made by Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London. The price is only 3s. per pair, of any draper, or post free for two extra stamps.

Three Hundred Virgins.

A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS.

CHAPTER XIII.—DEBORAH'S WOUND.

IT seemed from this, as well as from the previous adventure, that these serpents went in pairs, for here was evidently the mate in search of its companion.

To assert that Helston was not alarmed would be crediting him with a courage which he did not possess. Laurent, too, really a brave young fellow, turned white; for this was a kind of enemy new to his experience. He drew his revolver, and sat ready to return a shot; but at the same time he felt that, if the enemy was to be combated by him alone, their chance would be but small.

Meanwhile, Helston stood firm. He felt that the safety of the party depended on him, and, with finger on trigger, he waited, as the grass was seen to undulate about twenty yards to the front.

The rustling continued; and though the party could not see the serpent, its course was plainly enough marked, as it wound in and out amongst the bushes—never raising its head, though, from the ground.

Suddenly one of the women uttered a cry, and fell, fainting from fright; and, as if alarmed by the noise, the serpent raised its head above the long grass, and swayed it to and fro, with the accompaniment of a gentle, undulatory motion.

That was sufficient: a tongue of flame darted from Helston's fowling-piece, and the serpent lay writhing amongst the bushes, mortally wounded, and vainly endeavouring to make its escape.

'Thello completed the conquest by attacking the creature, and dividing it twice with his hatchet; the serpent proving to be a beautifully marked reptile, about twelve feet long.

This brought the expedition to an end. But for the exertions of the men, the game killed would have been left behind. This was, however, slung on the poles, and borne off; the party making for the shore, and following the line of coast, where the sand mingled with the rich growth of grasses, just beyond reach of the waves.

They had not gone above half the distance, though, when a fresh alarm was raised—Deborah Burrows, who was leading, uttering a short, sharp cry, and, when Helston pointed to her ankle—

"A little, short, thick snake, a few inches long," she said, excitedly. "I trod upon it, and it bit me, and then escaped—I don't think it was anything to mind."

"Let me look," said Helston, kneeling down; but she struck at him fiercely.

"How dare you!" she exclaimed, indignant virtue resenting the doctor's advance as an affront.

"You foolish woman, sit down!" exclaimed Helston. "Perhaps it was a viper. Do you want to lose your life? Sit down."

He half forced her into a sitting posture—one of the women supporting her, for she looked strangely white. Then with his knife he divided the stocking, and laid bare two tiny punctures; but the stocking was stained with a thick yellow matter.

"Poisonous," said Helston to himself.

And, in spite of poor Deborah's resistance, a stout band was placed tightly round the leg, so as to arrest the circulation, while Helston scarified the wound with a lancet, made it bleed freely, and, without hesitation, placed his lips to the spot, and tried to withdraw the venom.

"Quick, give her brandy out of my flask," he said, as he paused for a moment in his task, to again use the lancet. "Drink freely," he said, and he once more applied his lips to the wound. "Now another draught of brandy," he said, raising his head. "Don't be afraid; it won't hurt you now."

Deborah was looking at him; and she took the small metal cup of the flask with trembling fingers, a deep flush gathering in her cheeks, and her breath coming heavily.

"Now," said Helston, "you shall try and walk. Lean on my arm. Now, all of you—forward; we are close to the ship."

Deborah leaned heavily upon Helston's arm; but before they had gone far she grew so faint that he had to pass his arm round her, and half force the cup between her teeth with more brandy.

This revived her a little; and she turned her half-closed eyes gratefully upon him, as she once more essayed to walk on.

"Go forward, some of you," said Helston, "and get the raft ready; we must not lose a moment."

And, as he helped his patient forward, he watched, with great anxiety, the action of the poison, which rendered it necessary for him to administer the stimulant in large quantities about every hundred yards.

Deborah seemed to be dying fast—her face was of a leaden, livid hue, her pulses hardly beat; and a strange look of awe came upon every face as, in a hushed way, they hastened on, 'Thello whispering—

"Golly, Mass' Laurent, who tink little snake do more harm than big?"

The poison was evidently of the most virulent nature; and just as they reached the raft, the poor woman uttered a low sigh, the words "Oh, doctor," and became apparently insensible. But without losing a moment, Helston raised her in his arms, threw her over his shoulder, and ran down over the sands, waded a few yards, got on the raft, and was towed across to the vessel.

Reaching the deck, he called loudly for Mary Dance, who came directly, with Grace Monroe, Helston carrying his patient into the cabin, and placing her in the captain's cot.

"Quick, brandy—keep pouring it between her lips," said Helston.

"Her teeth are clenched," said Grace, who held a cup to the insensible woman's lips.

Helston left his task of promoting a flow of blood from the wound, and, forcing the teeth apart, brandy was trickled between her lips almost without cessation, efforts made to restore the circulation, and the result watched with grave anxiety.

Mary Dance looked inquiringly at the doctor, who shook his head; but Grace went farther.

"Is there any danger?" she said, softly.

"Very great, I fear," he said—"I have done all I can. Nature must do the rest."

As he spoke, his eyes fell upon the soft, sweet face bent over the hard, worldly woman, and watched Grace's earnest efforts to be of service, thinking the while of the insults cast upon her, and the bitterness of the woman who was now stricken down.

"Poor thing!" said Grace, softly; and the tears stood in her eyes as she held one of the wounded woman's discoloured hands in hers. "It seems hard to die like this, far away from all friends."

"Some people never make friends, Grace," said Helston, in a low voice—"others make those who would die for the sake of a few loving words."

Grace started, gazed at him in a frightened way, and then lowered her eyes, blushing vividly; while Mary Dance gazed from one to the other, looking half pleased, half puzzled.

Helston said no more; but laid his hand upon Deborah's forehead, and in an instant professional pride sent a flush through his face.

"Victory!" he exclaimed.

"Is she better?" cried Grace, eagerly.

"Yes," said Helston. "Now a little more spirit—she'll live to make us all terribly uncomfortable; there's a gentle perspiration coming on. I say, Mary Dance," he said, with a droll look, "hadn't I better let her die?"

"How can you go on so, Mr. Helston?" said Mary, shortly. "Poor woman, it will be no end of a lesson to her!"

Helston was right, a profuse perspiration came on; and at the end of an hour Deborah Burrows was sleeping heavily, with Grace Monroe watching by her pillow.

It was towards evening that Helston was standing in the cabin. He had looked at his patient, who was still fast asleep, and then stood by her watcher's chair.

"Grace Monroe," he said, in a low voice, "have I annoyed you in any way?"

"Annoyed me, Mr. Helston?" she said, in a husky whisper—"oh, no."

"But you seem so different to me now. When our voyage began, you could always meet me with a fresh smile of welcome. Now you avoid me—turn from me, as if my appearance pained you."

"Indeed, you are mistaken, Mr. Helston," said Grace, turning away her head. "I am very grateful for your kindness."

"But it seems," he continued, and his voice was very low and deep—trembling, too, in its earnestness—"it seems as if, while I have gone on growing more and more distasteful to you, you have become daily more dear to me."

"Mr. Helston!" cried Grace, pitifully.

"I must speak," he said, in an excited whisper. "Why should I be silent? Grace, I tell you, as one who never dwelt upon such things before, whose every thought has been his profession, that I love you dearly."

"For Heaven's sake, Mr. Helston, be silent."

"No," he said, catching her unwilling hand, "I will not be silent, until I know my fate. Grace Monroe, I love you with all a man's first strong love! You have awakened in me a passion at which I have laughed in others. Day by day has it grown upon me, till I have suffered deeply on seeing how you

avoided me, and treated me with coldness. I know that I have not much to offer—that I am but a poor man—"

"Mr. Helston," exclaimed Grace, desperately, "this is cruelty. I am here, a poor, unprotected woman—doubly so now that this accident has befallen us on our voyage. Do you forget that it is your duty to be one of my protectors—to save me from insult?"

"No," he said, holding her hand with both his, and pressing it to his throbbing heart, "I do not forget it; and I ask you to give me the right to protect you always—as my loved and honoured wife."

"Is this a time to ask me?" she said, withdrawing her hand, as the tears coursed down her cheeks.

"Yes," he said—"why not? Am I to live on here tortured by doubt? Am I to see help come that shall separate us?—you to go to your destination, while I am dragged back by duty to England. Grace, cruelty cannot live in that gentle heart; unkindness can never gaze from those sweet eyes, whose every look I treasure. Oh, darling, give me some hope—one kind look, one kind word, that I may live—"

"Mr. Helston," she sobbed, turning from him, "you are cruel to me."

"Cruel to you—my love—my hope—you, for whom I would die! Tell me how?"

"See how your attentions have brought persecutions on me already."

"Grace—darling," he whispered, and his arm was passed round her, in spite of her timid, maiden reserve—"tell me to hope, set my mind at rest, and I will be all that you could wish. No hasty words or looks of mine shall wound you, no action on my part shall draw bitter remarks from any spiteful woman here. Only bid me hope."

"I cannot—oh, I cannot," she sobbed, trying to withdraw from his embrace.

"You are cruel to me," he said, tenderly. "I hoped that in my love I should find joy, counsel, tenderness; and you make love bitter to me—I, who knew not what it was. But tell me, sweet, dearest Grace, you will relent towards me—one kind word of hope."

She glided from him, and stood beyond the head of the cot, as she whispered the one word—

"Hush!"

For, at that moment, Deborah Burrows moved one hand uneasily, turned slightly, so that her hard-featured face was towards Helston, and there she lay, with her eyes half closed, her senses returning slowly.

Suddenly she opened them wide, gazing full at the doctor, in a wild, half-conscious manner. A minute after, though, recollection seemed to come with a flash, and, as Helston advanced to the side of the cot, she caught his hand in hers, kissed it passionately, and held it tightly to her breast, sobbing hysterically the while.

Completely bewildered, Helston raised his eyes to Grace.

She was leaving the cabin, and Helston saw that she did so with her head bent down.

CHAPTER XIV.—ASKED TO PRESCRIBE.

"WELL," said Mary Dance, entering a few moments after, "is the patient better, doctor?"

"Yes," said Helston, who was standing holding her pulse. "The danger is past now; but it was a narrow escape."

"How do you feel?" said Mary, kindly, as she leaned over the pale-faced woman.

"Better, much better; but very weak," said Deborah, in a low, changed tone of voice.

"Shall I sit with her, doctor?"

"Yes, by all means," said Helston; "while I go and get something prepared for her."

There was a reproachful look in Deborah's eyes as the young man hastened from the cabin, and then she closed them, and lay without speaking; for a change had come over the spirit of Deborah Burrows' dream. She was beginning—nay, had found that Nature was stronger than art, and that strong-minded women were not always possessed of iron hearts.

The poison of the snake soon passed off, and Deborah was about again, as eager and active as ever. But it was impossible not to observe that another poison was at work within her breast.

Perhaps, though, it is wrong to call it poison; for its action was of a gentle, softening nature. She was quieter, and less demonstrative in her ways, which the women about her set down to weakness, resulting from the wound. But it was not so with all. Towards Grace Monroe she was bitterness itself; and after Mary Dance's careful nursing, she left her without a word of thanks.

The business of providing for the future went busily on, and one or other of the men always accompanied the working parties of women ashore, to act as guard in case of noxious beasts, while water casks were filled, and ground was cleared and sown. Under Deborah's direction and drilling, a regular course of daily work was planned out and executed.

It is not too much to say that this lady's arrangements were admirable, every step being taken as if there were no prospect in the future of their being relieved from their exile; and, knowing that the ample stores of the ship could only last for a time, provision must be made to supply the loss in the future.

Once a week the three men had a pig hunt, with the result that the larder was supplied with fresh meat, there being several herds scattered about the island. Two other days were devoted to fishing. These expeditions were decidedly dangerous, on account of the snakes and serpents; but, so far, there had been no more adventures attended with peril.

It was here that some of the strong-minded arrangements began to crop out.

An expedition had been planned, and Laurent and Helston were ashore waiting, when they were joined by 'Thello, who had obtained leave from "Ma'am Burrows" to accompany them.

"Yah—yah—yah! hy-yah—hy-yah—hy-yah! Mass' Laurent. Hy-yah—hy-yah! mass' doctor," he cried, showing his teeth and rolling about in the sand in the immoderate display of his mirth. But the next

moment he was up on his feet, striking at something wriggling in the sand. "Yah, little debble—dah, how you like dat?" he exclaimed, raising a tiny snake upon the end of a stick, its head having been bruised so that it was harmless. "You try to bite dis niggah again, eh?"

"That was a narrow escape, 'Thello," said Helston. "Where was it?"

"On de sand, sah. I roll ober him, and he lift him lilly head and spit; but I too many for him. Him poison snake, sah."

"Without a doubt," said Helston. "Look at the spade-shaped head, and thin neck. It's a viper. Throw it away."

"Dah," said 'Thello, hurling the viper into the sea, "dat's a taste for de sharks. I hope him not agree wid 'em. But, golly, Mass' Laurent, sah, such a game!"

In the exuberance of his delight, and undeterred by his escape, 'Thello began to roll about on the sand, once more chuckling loudly.

"What is it?" said Laurent.

"Golly, sah—Ma'am Deborah, sah; she cut de lilly women's petticoats all off short, and dey all got canvas trouser and big boot out ob de store—to go ashore—hy-yah—hy-yah—hy-yah!"

'Thello was right. The women had been busily preparing, and a kind of uniform had been improvised from the abundant ship stores—those who were for the shore expedition wearing a shortened petticoat, canvas drawers, and stout boots, which would protect them from the assault of the tiny vipers scattered amongst the thin grass growing by the sandy shore.

At first sight it looked ludicrous, and those who were the pioneers of the new costume seemed painfully conscious; but the wisdom of the proceeding was very evident, the women that day getting over the ground with double the ease of previous journeys, when at every dozen steps some one had been caught in the briars.

Helston paid little attention to them at starting, for he had caught sight of Grace Monroe as she stood on the deck. He felt bitter at heart; for during the past few days she had religiously avoided him, never giving him the slightest opportunity for explanation of any sort, and his pride was somewhat roused. It was very little satisfaction to him that he had, in turn, avoided Deborah Burrows, save at such times as he had been compelled to see her and prescribe, when, to his annoyance, the meetings had evidently been contrived alone; and more than once he was painfully aware that Grace knew of Deborah being alone with him in the cabin.

On these occasions Deborah had been very quiet and subdued; she had answered his questions in a low voice, that made him shiver; when she looked up in his face, it was with timid eyes; and in a rage, one day, after hearing a gentle sigh, he had asked himself why he had not allowed the poison to work its will.

But now there was this expedition afoot, and Helston gladly welcomed it; so that in the excitement and exertion he might get away from harassing thought for the time being.

To his horror, though, he found that Deborah was

about to head the little party, and she smiled at him softly as she passed.

Under other circumstances, Helston would have smiled in return—not from any amiable feelings, but at the lady's aspect, for while adopting the semi-masculine costume, she had evidently been paying no little attention to her personal appearance.

There was no time for thought, though, the party starting at once, Laurent ranging up alongside of Helston, looking ill-humoured and low-spirited, and 'Thello, with an axe on one shoulder and a gun on the other, following behind.

"Does your arm pain you?" said Helston, after they had gone a few hundred yards.

"No," said Laurent; "I was only thinking how tired I am of this life, and wondering whether we could build a vessel to take us off."

"Impossible," said Helston—"three hundred people!"

"I'm afraid it is," said Laurent. "I've lain awake at night trying to find a way to get the old *Zenobia* afloat again, when we might have rigged up jury masts; but that bar outside keeps us in. It would be impossible."

"Have patience," said Helston. "A vessel will some day see the signal."

"De signal am took down, mass' doctor," said 'Thello, who had overheard his words.

"Taken down?" said the two young men, in a breath.

"Yes, sah—him took down the day 'fore yes'day."

"Who took it down?"

"Dis chile, sah," said 'Thello, proudly. "Him climb the mountain, long o' Ma'am Lee and Ma'am Smith, by the capen's orders, sah, and take um down and bring um home to Deborah. Hy-ah! hy-yah!"

'Thello grinned hugely, and rolled his eyes.

"Speak out, and say what you mean," said Laurent, sharply.

"I mean, sah, dat de capen—Ma'am Deborah, sah, she send dis chile to take down de signal flag; and him juss did. Dat's all."

"This means settling down, with a vengeance," said Laurent.

"Sah, it am cos de flag is dirty, dat's all, sah," said 'Thello, and he fell back.

But there were other thoughts in the hearts of his companions, as they tramped on.

Their reverie was broken by Deborah, who, allowing them to overtake her, said—

"I propose that we cut across to the north this time, Mr. Helston. We have not explored in that direction yet; and I am anxious to find fruits besides the cocoa-nuts, that may be of service to us."

Helston bowed gravely.

"Will you take the lead?" she said.

He bowed again, without meeting her eyes; and the three men went to the front.

The way was not more dense than those they had before traversed, but much more beautiful. Nature seemed to have spared no pains to render the place a perfect Eden, rich in flowers and gorgeous foliage of every tint of green. The rivulets and cascades were more frequent; and dark, shady arcades of a soft green were succeeded by patches

golden with sunshine. At every few yards they started birds whose plumage shone with the hues of the rainbow; and there was a dreary languor induced by the soft, perfumed air, that made exertion a greater effort with each mile.

Of the little vipers they had no fear out in this part, their *habitat* seeming to be in the sand, among short grass; but there was a keen look-out kept up constantly for the large serpents, a rustling to the left putting all once again upon the *qui vive*.

On this occasion, too, there was the novelty of exploring new ground, and the expectation of making some new discovery. They started three herds of pigs before they had gone many miles, and saw plenty of indications of more. A few small animals of the nature of opossums, too, were put up, to escape hurriedly in the branches of the trees; but there was no sign of deer, goat, or sheep.

They had been walking for quite a couple of hours, when Laurent strayed off to the left in pursuit of a magnificently plumaged lory, and he was followed by 'Thello and the women, eager to see the trophy fall to his gun.

Helston stood leaning upon his piece for a few moments, and then went straight ahead, seeing the trend of the valley, and believing that Laurent would make a curve, and join him farther on.

He was dreamy and thoughtful, and, as a beautiful little dell opened before him, he walked slowly on, with his gun in the hollow of his arm, wondering how it was all to end, and whether it would not be better to write something by way of explanation to Grace.

"What must she think of me?" he said, half aloud.

Then he went listlessly on, parting the boughs with his gun barrel, examining a flower here, a berry there, and quite heedless of the lapse of time; till he drew up by a beautiful little fall of silvery water, which came plashing down from a steep rock that completely shut in the end of the dell. The moss grew thick and green all over the stones which lay about, the air was soft and humid, and overhead there were grand tree-ferns, every leaf a magnificent lattice work of the tiniest lace-like crossings, shutting out the burning sun, and forming a nook that was perfect in its beauty.

He stood looking at the clustering blossoms, rich with perfume—at the clinging vines and mosses that carpeted the stones; and then, after gazing round for danger, as men do gaze who tramp through wild and unexplored regions, he loosened the straps of his satchel, that he carried full of provisions, threw it on the mossy carpet, and then, pouring a little spirit in the cup of his flask, he filled it in the limpid rock-pool, and drank heartily.

"What a heavenly spot!" he said, as he replaced the cup. "What a scene! Such a home as might have been the dwelling of the first Adam. Heigho," he said, softly; "well, there is no Eve, and I must mind that there is no serpent."

He glanced sharply round, and placed himself upon a mossy block of lava, and sat thinking. Then he half opened his satchel, to draw out some food; but let the bag fall, and allowed his head to drop upon his hand.

As he did so, the leaves were gently put aside about twenty yards lower down, and the face of Deborah Burrows appeared, watching him intently.

A minute after, with a smile on her lip, she came softly forward unnoticed, till a faint rustle made by the ferns she brushed aside startled Helston, and he seized his gun.

"Are you going to shoot me?" she said, softly, as she advanced.

And he let the gun fall back amongst the ferns.

"You here?" he said, without rising.

"Yes, I thought you lost," she said, in the same timid voice; "and I came to look."

"Where are the others?" he said, looking at her, with a deep red spot burning through each sun-browned cheek.

"I don't know—far away," said Deborah, standing by his knee, clasping her hands, and looking down in his face.

Helston remained silent, listening; but the musical plash of the little cascade was the only sound that could be heard in the wondrous solitude that surrounded them.

"I am thirsty," she said at last, raising her clasped hands towards him.

He started from his lethargy, and filling the cup from the pool, tempered it with brandy, her hand resting for a moment on his as she took the cup from his fingers.

"Will you not drink first?" she said, softly; and she held him the cup.

He took it mechanically, and raised it to his lips, returning it, for her to drain the liquid with avidity, as he sank back listlessly on his mossy seat.

"Thanks," she said, giving back the cup. "I am hungry, too," she said, smiling—"you have food there."

He busied himself in taking out the biscuit and fish which he had brought, picked a large, fleshy leaf, and made it the plate, and then offered it to her.

"Will you not sit down?" he said, quietly.

She sat down at his feet; and as she had done with the cup, so now she did with the provision, offering it to him, and he ate with her quite calmly, and if he did see the awkwardness of the situation, determined not in any way to show it.

"My ankle is quite well again, doctor," she said, gaily, after they had eaten for some time in silence.

"I am very glad," he said, quietly. "It was a most virulent poison. I was afraid at one time that we had lost you."

She was seated at his feet, and at those words she started round, resting her clasped hands upon his knee, her head thrown back, and her dark eyes gazing up into his.

"Say that again," she said, huskily.

"I say I was afraid that we had lost you," said Helston, smiling.

"Is that true?" she said.

"True?—yes. The poison seemed to dart through your veins like magic, and it was only by the active measures I took that your life was saved."

"Yes—you took active measures," she said, her voice sounding quite hoarse. "I remember now, though it has all seemed misty since. You bound

the leg—you made the wound bleed; you placed your lips to it, and drew my heart's blood, and saved my life."

It was but a quick, sharp motion; and as she said those last words excitedly, she raised her hands from where they had rested, and flung her arms round him, nestling to his breast; and as she clung there, her face strained upward towards his, she whispered, hoarsely—

"Yes, you pressed your lips to the wound; press them now to my lips, and tell me that you will love me—that you will make me your own—that the love you have made me feel for you shall be required, and that you will be my own, my very own."

"Are you mad?" he exclaimed, trying to rise; but she clung to him.

"Yes, mad," she whispered, nestling closer; "mad for you, my own—you, you brave, true, great man. You made me love you when I thought I hated all, and that a man was something to be laughed at—derided."

"Deborah Burrows!"

"Yes, thrust me away," she said, clinging more closely, and burying her burning face in his breast—"beat me, ill-use me, make me your slave; but love me, Charles—Charles—call me your own once, my brave, handsome boy—you whom I love as woman never loved before."

He struggled to free himself, but she was strong, and clung the more tightly.

"No, no—no, no; you cannot get away," she said, in a low, husky voice—"you shall not go. Look around you, at this lovely spot—could there be a more beautiful temple for our love? Listen, Charles. You saved my life, and it is yours. But listen: I am mistress here, in this beautiful island. Be my king, and I will be your queen; and we will rule here as we please. What is the world to us? What matter that others think and talk, you will be my own—my dear—my love. I am not handsome—I am not beautiful, as some women are; but I will love you the more dearly. My every thought shall be of you and your happiness—happiness that shall last to the end.

"Why do you struggle?" she went on, as he made a vigorous effort to free himself.

But her fingers were enlaced behind, and it would have required greater violence than he cared to use.

"Because I wish to free myself. This is most unwomanly."

"Yes, I know," she said, in a smothered voice, for her face was hidden in his breast; "but I am not like other women are. I was bitter against you once, till you turned my hate to love; and now it flows over, and I do not shrink to tell you what I feel. Ah, you struggle to free yourself. Have you not one word, one look of love, one caress? I will be grateful for so little. If you beat me, I should love you the more for each blow. Think of what our life will be—here in this paradise of beauty. Let me sit here now—now that you are tired, my own; lay your head in my lap and sleep, while I watch over you as fiercely as a tigress would over her young. Ah, you throw me off! I do not mind—there, I am kneeling to you."

For, as he extricated himself, she sank to his feet

and clasped them, laying her cheek against them, and grovelling there, with her eyes closed.

"Deborah Burrows, will you listen—will you hear what I say?" he said, speaking quickly.

"Yes, I could lie here and listen to you for ever," she said, softly, "and fancy that the smiles that came upon my poor, hard, homely face made it handsome—beautiful to my king. Listen to me, first," she continued. "I was always plain and homely, and despised, till I grew bitter—my heart was hard, and I thought the tenderness was all turned to stone; but no: one day I awoke—one day, oh, yes, so short a time ago—to find that it was but a hard crust that your hand broke, and then the love that had been hidden so long gushed forth. Blame me, mock me, laugh at me, if you will; but love me—love me—call me your own."

Charles Helston stood there, flushed and silent, in the midst of that beauteous scene, with the woman he absolutely detested grovelling at his feet; but as he heard her impassioned words, and felt the depth of the love with which he must have inspired her, the anger and disgust which had at first animated him gave way to a feeling of pity, of sorrow. A short time before he had looked upon her as hard, inhuman, and cold; and she had laid bare her breast, showing it to be passionate and warm, and full of love for him, who would never say loving word to her in return.

The musical tinkle of the cascade still softly broke the silence, and now across the dell came the low hum of some beetle; then, to break the soft spell, there was the jarring shriek of a parrot, repeated at intervals in the far distance. A minute after came the soft, melodious chiming of the bell bird, and then again silence.

Suddenly Deborah raised her flushed and tearful face, to gaze up at his sad and sorrowful countenance; and she slowly rose, gazing fixedly in his eyes, in a strange, wondering way.

"Have I not said enough?" she whispered, catching his hand in hers. "You don't believe me, because I am so changed."

"Yes, I believe you," he said, sadly.

"Then speak. You cannot hate me for wooing you as I do; and you are too good and brave a man to care for the sickly talk about maiden modesty. Tell me—speak to me, here. We are alone, and there is no one to hear our secrets. You are silent. Why don't you speak?"

"You have told me you love me," he said, quietly.

"Yes—yes!" she exclaimed, nestling to him; and her passion flashed from her eyes.

"My poor girl," he said, with husky voice, "I love another, as dearly as you love me!"

A PIANO-TUNER accosts a deaf old gentleman sitting in his porch in New York, and says, "Good morning, sir; I come to tune your piano." Deaf old gent—"Eh? didn't understand what you said." "I come to tune your piano." "You will have to speak louder; I can't hear what you say." "I come to tune your piano!" "Oh, you come from Louisiana, do you? Well, that's good; sit down and tell us all about it."

A Demon for Eight-and-Six.

"NOW, sir, if you please, I'm waiting."

This was said with the most sarcastic of smiles, and accompanied by a look that seemed to go through my head, and tickle the parting at the back.

"I repeat my question, Mr. Cumley, and I pause for a reply. Where did that come from?"

"I tell you I don't know," I said, peevishly.

"Don't tell me you don't know, Mr. Cumley."

"Don't be in a passion," I said.

"I'm not in a passion, Mr. Cumley—I'm as calm as any woman can be, and I insist upon your telling me where that came from."

"Well, your face is as white as your eyes are red, and they can hear you across the street, you shout so loud; and if that isn't being in a passion, I should like to know what is."

"Should you, Mr. Cumley?"—this with the most sardonic of sneers—"but perhaps before you are enlightened on the subject of my temper, Mr. C., you will be kind enough to tell me where that came from?"

"I don't know, I tell you," I said, deliberately.

"It's false, sir; it's a wicked story—you do know; and you've been deceiving your poor—(sob)—long-suffering—(sob)—patient—(sob)—unhappy—(sob)—neglected—(sob)—little wife. I'll go home—(sob)—to mamma—(sob)—and never—never—never—never—"

"Oh, come, I say, Tilly," I said, gently; "what is the good of—"

"Get away, sir—don't touch me—wretch! Go and say your wicked, false-hearted stuff to the creature from whose head that long, yellow hair came—faugh! I don't believe it came out of her head, but from some three-and-sixpenny false curl. It's too dull to be real."

"Well, you seem to know all about it," I said, grinning, "and *she* isn't the only one who wears false hair."

"Oh!—oh!—oh! This is too much—I'll, I'll go and—oh, dear—oh, dear!"

Spank!—bang!

That spank was on my cheek as I tried to stop and comfort the little woman; the bang was the door as she rushed through; and this was followed by a couple more distant bangs of bed-room doors upstairs.

"Shut out," I said with a sigh, as I drew the easy-chair up to the fire. "Well, I shan't go to a cold bed, anyhow. Don't see it after fifteen months of happy matrimonial—happy matrimonial—happy—No, hang it all, it hasn't been quite happy matrimonial life. For of all the jealous little—whist!"

For the door opened with a rush, and Tilly thrust in her fierce little head—

"Now, sir, I'll give you one more chance," she cried—"are you going to tell me where that long, fair hair came from?"

"It must have been one of yours, my dear," I said, mildly.

"Wretch! when mine are dark brown."

"Then I must have caught it of Jenkinson at dinner. He does drive out a lady with yellow hair."

"Wretch!"

Bang!

She went off in a worse tantrum than ever; there was another banging of doors, and then came a loud, passionate wailing that increased more and more in violence.

"Woke the baby," I said, grinning. "Good job too, it will make her calm down. I'll have a smoke till she comes round."

The little clock on the chimneypiece struck three just then, as I took up my dressing-gown from the back of the chair, where it had been hung to warm, and stuck my smoking cap on my head, preparatory to taking off my dress coat and vest.

"Three o'clock on a Christmas morning! Nice beginning for a festive day," I said. "Came home sober as a judge; never even stumbled over the mat, or kicked my boots about the passage. Blow Brown, and his Christmas Eve party. I wish I hadn't gone."

I pulled off my coat, and hung it over a chair. Then I gave my white waistcoat a rip, tore down the buttons, jerked it off, and threw it on the hearth-rug, where I held it down with my foot, while I put on and tied the strings of my dressing-gown.

"I might have known there'd be a row," I said, apostrophising the waistcoat, as I picked it up and felt in the pockets to see if any spare cash might be there; and then, after poking the fire up into a good blaze, I stuffed that garment right in, and held it down with the poker, watching it with grim satisfaction as it blazed and glowed and blackened into tinder, through which a lot of little sparks seemed to dance.

"There," I said, raking it about, and grimly watching the burning tinder fly up the chimney—"there, I believe you were a demon. Now you're gone, and good luck to you, for you'll never do me another ill turn."

I bought that innocent-looking white waistcoat in the Strand for eight shillings and sixpence, and thought I had got a bargain. So I had, but not of the kind I fancied; for my cheap waistcoat was magnetic, and whenever I wore it in its pristine innocence it invited all the floating blacks to come to my bosom and stay, the consequence being that in six months it cost me thirteen shillings for washing. If I wore it at dinner-time it took to gaping in the front, as if it were hungry, and used somehow to contrive to swallow pieces of bread, bits of salmon and lobster sauce, gravy, fruit out of the tarts, and, above all, drops of wine. Then, when I stood up, it would conceal these by holding them tightly to the front of my immaculate shirt—I was immaculate about my shirt fronts—with the result that a couple of pounds more per annum went to my laundress, in consequence of horrible stains, and pads of provisions mashed up against my studs, where they were not ornamented with soup.

I put that vest away over and over again, at the bottom of my drawer; but it used to creep over the other clothes, and lie on the top, ready to tempt me with its innocent looks, so that I have again and again been deluded into wearing it both winter and summer, but only for trouble and annoyance to follow.

The last time I wore it was at a ball, and I prided myself on my appearance; but hang me if that night, whenever I went to fetch an ice, or a glass of wine, or any refreshment for a lady, if some snob or another did not call out to me, "Heah, bring that heah!" or, "I say, I'll take that ice!" or, "Waitah, two cups of coffee!"

I could have sworn—mind, I did not, but I could; for, when I went to a glass to look and ask myself what it meant, there was that beastly waistcoat smiling at me, and I knew it was due to its abominable cut.

I put it away dirty; crammed it to the bottom of my drawer, declaring I had done with it; but Tilly sent it to the wash unknown to me; and on this very Christmas Eve, when I went up to dress, she had put out my things, and there was the white waistcoat looking so innocent that I put it on.

That night I was chaffed outrageously for going in what my friends called my war paint, when every one else was in morning dress; and Biffley started what he termed the fun by calling me Charles, or Cholls, with the result that I was treated as the waiter for the rest of the evening.

However, I laughed it off, setting it down to that demon of a waistcoat, and got home at last rather tired and sleepy, to find all snug and comfortable; but I had hardly seated myself, and begun describing the party, when Tilley exclaimed—

"Why, how you have dirtied your waistcoat!"

She leaned forward to brush off a bit of something sticking there—I think it was toasted cheese—when she suddenly changed colour, dropped her handkerchief, caught hold of something twisted round my top button, and drew out a long, fair hair, exclaiming—

"Dick, where did this come from?"

Then followed the row.

I sat and thought of it all, smiling as I sniffed the scent of burning left by my familiar, as I said to myself—

"Now, where the dickens did that hair come from? for I'll swear I never went near any fair-haired—hallo!"

The door had opened very softly, and I felt a shiver of dread as a figure clothed in white glided in, and said in a soft, low whisper—

"Oh, Dick, dear, it's so cold upstairs. Do come to bed."

"Humph!" I ejaculated, as the soft little figure in its white dressing-gown glided to my knee, sat down, and began to warm its little feet on the fender—"humph! Thought I was shut out."

"Oh, Dick—dear, darling, dearest Dick!—don't, don't, please don't say another word about it; for I've found that I've been such a little silly."

"Taken you a long time to discover it," I said, gruffly.

"Oh, don't be cross," she cried, kissing me, and nestling closer.

"I'm not cross," I said, gloomily; "only such jealousy is—"

"Absurd, Dick! Yes, of course, Dick. But there, don't let's spoil Christmas, now it's all over."

"But it isn't all over," I said, refusing the proffered kiss of peace.

"Oh, yes, it is," she said, laughing. "I've found it out."

"What? Who the fair lady is?"

"Yes," she said, nodding; "it's Jane."

"Jane?"

"Yes, sir; the nasty, impudent girl has been using our brushes. I found them full when I went to do my hair; and then, to make sure, I went up to look as she lay in bed; and now, dear darling Dick, a Merry Christmas to you, and I'll never be jealous again, and a Happy New Year."

Spring of a rattle; banging at our door; ringing of our bell; Jane, of the fair hair, shrieking upstairs; the baby awake and crying; my wife fleeing *en déshabille*; a terrible smell of fire; and a great glowing pad of burning soot fell down the chimney into the fender.

"What's up?" I cried, opening the window.

"Your chimney blazing out of the pot like hooray, sir," said a hoarse-voiced policeman, as a few flakes of snow floated into the room. "It's all right, sir—I've sent for the hingsins."

"Hang the engines!" I roared. But it was of no use: they came; the fire was put out by bunging up the chimney; but, one way and another, that job cost me fifteen pounds ten shillings and fourpence halfpenny, the whole of which was a sort of parting legacy, or bit of revenge from the demon of my bosom, since the burning tinder that flew up had ignited the soot.

"You should have had your chimney kept properly swept," says somebody.

So I do; but what amount of sweeping would have prevented the malevolence and cunning of such a familiar demon as that white waistcoat?

A Storm at Calcutta.

THOSE who have lived on the banks of the river Trent, and have seen what is there called the "bore" or "egre," can form some idea of the effect which would be produced in a large eastern river by a gigantic storm wave rushing up at lightning speed amongst the crowded shipping.

The bore in our rivers is only seen at particular times, and during peculiar states of the tides, when the water, being forced by the wind, is driven up a funnel-shaped estuary with irresistible force, and as the river narrows, the water increases in depth, and gradually assumes the form of a wave from two to six or eight feet high, which rushes up, bearing all before it, and often does a vast amount of mischief.

This is on ordinary occasions; but when by some violent convulsion of nature, such as may be seen in tropic lands, the sea is set in motion, the effect of these tidal waves is something awful.

For instance, at times on the western coast of America the huge wave caused by an earthquake has been known to wreck vessels wholesale, even to carrying a large man-of-war on its crest a mile or two inland, and then, retiring, leave the vessel to fall to pieces in a position where it can never be restored to the sea.

The Hooghly, that vast river which runs past Calcutta, has an evil notoriety for these terrible waves. Its low-lying shores are densely inhabited, it is thick with shipping, and it lies in a portion of the globe which is subject to those terrible commotions of the atmosphere known as cyclones.

Just lately one of these fearful storms has devastated the district, driving the tide up in so awful a wave that the marshy fertile lands known as the Sunderbunds have been swept, villages washed away on the instant, and somewhere about two hundred thousand persons have been drowned or have died of the sickness and fever that followed.

During the time the storm lasted, the scene is described as having been awful in the extreme. The river rose in huge waves, which were afterwards swallowed, as it were, by the greater one which followed; the trees on the banks were laid prostrate like twigs; the people, who gathered in frightened crowds upon the ghauts or landing-steps, were overtaken in an instant, and swept away to certain death; and the vessels with which the river was crowded were dashed together in wild confusion.

The long thatched, native barges were whirled together, to fill and sink; huge East Indianmen heeled over, came into collision, filled, and went down; while the smaller boats flew before the gale for a few minutes, and then disappeared.

So terrible a scene is fortunately of rare occurrence, but the City of Palaces has a sad record of these visitations.

The people inhabiting the low-lying districts have been the worst sufferers, for they have no protection from these tidal waves.

Some few attempts have been made to embank and drive protecting piles round these villages, but upon so trifling a scale that they have been swept away on the instant, and with them the wretched people.

Their successors, however, learn nothing by the lesson, but rebuild in the same exposed positions, even as the natives of Italy and Sicily go and dwell on the mountain side once more, as soon as it has cooled after an eruption.

Among the Icebergs.

CHAPTER IX.

ANN was as much excited and elate as I. We were to go, then; and the matter had been easily arranged—so easily had things fallen into the right grooves, that I told myself all must have been fated beforehand, and all that we had to do was to persevere, and we should find the poor frozen-up crew of the *Dawn*, and bring them safely back.

At home they were perfectly surprised at the news, how brought to them I could not think; but after talking and appealing, they seemed to take so strange a course, that my first misgivings began to trouble me—they evidently thought me mad.

What should I do? They might try coercion. I had heard of doctors being called in and making declarations, on the strength of which persons had been incarcerated in some private asylum. A few days back I could have welcomed such a fate; but



STORM AT CALCUTTA.

now the very thought was enough to bring on that of which they mentally accused me.

There could be no doubt of what they would do—they might not take such strong measures, but even the turning of the key of my bed-room door would have the desired effect; and if I were kept a prisoner, what should I do—how could I act?

They were very kind and gentle to me for the rest of the day, and once it was on my lips to ask them if Stephen Ellerby had told them of my intentions, after making himself thoroughly acquainted with what had taken place at the office; but I refrained, and that night, feeling more at ease, I retired to my bed-room.

"I am so excited," I said to myself, "that I imagine all sorts of romantic things."

I sat down by the window for a few minutes, in the hope that Ann would make some excuse for coming to me for a while; and as I sat listening, sure enough I heard a footstep on the stairs, and then a faint rustling, as if some one was coming cautiously along the passage, the door opened gently, a hand was passed in, and then the warning thoughts I had had occurred to me; but I was too late. I dashed at the door, but it was close shut, and held, while the key taken from inside was rapidly thrust in, and turned; and I stood cold and trembling, for I knew that I was a prisoner.

It was my own fault, too, for had not a mental voice warned me? I ought to have fled, and placed myself under Mr. Moore's protection; while now—

The weak tears rose to my eyes, but I fought them down; this was no time for weakness. I knew that I must be strong, or all that had that morning been done was done in vain.

I pass over the agonizing thoughts of the next two nights and days. It was evident that, as I surmised, they thought me mad, and so they treated me. A great, coarse, firm woman came to bring my meals; but in spite of all I said—my appeals, my prayers that I might see my father, my mother—I could obtain from her not one single word; while, when once I strove to dart by her to the door, and we struggled together, I found that, as far as strength went, I was like a child in her hands.

I felt that I should go mad indeed, if I were kept like this; and on the third night I was sitting trying to imagine some scheme by which I could escape. I had tried hard to keep up spirit and strength, and I had forced myself to eat, though every morsel of food seemed to choke me; but a black cloud of despair was settling down upon me, and I knew that I could do nothing.

It was about one o'clock, I think, when a slight scratching noise seemed to come from a cupboard in one corner of the room—such a noise as I had often heard from some rat behind one of the skirting boards; but now it seemed to cause a shiver of dread to pass through me, till, calling myself coward, and asking how I could have expected to brave the perils of the north when weak enough to notice that noise, I raised myself in my chair, and thought of going to bed.

There was the noise, though, again, and certainly from that cupboard. Could it be a rat?

On the other side was the best bed-room, unoc-

cupied, I knew; and, trying to laugh down my timorousness, I walked boldly to the door, opened it, and uttered a loud cry; for, as I hastily dragged back the door, there came from within a soft "Hush!" and, directly after, my name was uttered in smothered tones.

"Who's there?" I said, my heart beating furiously.

"Oh, pray hush, or we shall be undone! It's me, Miss Jessie—Ann."

The next moment I had hold of a hand which was passed through a small opening in the back of the cupboard, and was weeping copiously.

"Don't cry, miss, please," she exclaimed, "there aint time now. I thought I'd get to speak to you, and ask you what's to be done."

"Can we get away, Ann?" I whispered.

"To be sure we can, miss, if I make this big enough; for it's only lath and plaster. But do listen at the door, to see if there's any one woke by your noise."

Ann's warning was needed, for a moment after there was a knock at my door, and I heard my father's voice.

"Are you ill, Jessie?"

"No," I answered, boldly, though there was a choking sensation in my throat the while.

And then my heart felt sore, for I heard him sigh as he turned away, and his door closed directly after. For what was I about to do? The answer came swiftly enough, to pass through me like a pang: I was about to flee from those who loved me, to perform what at times almost seemed to be an insane act; but something seemed to urge me on, and I told myself that it was my duty.

"Do you think he's gone, miss?" whispered Ann, softly.

And her words seemed to bring me back to the present.

"Yes," I said.

"Come in here, then, miss; and shut the door so that the noise shall not pass."

And I did so, when—crack!—crack!—there was the sound of half-cut laths breaking, and the pattering down of mortar for fully half an hour before Ann ceased from her task, and declared that there was room to get through.

We listened from time to time attentively, but all was silent in the house; though when some heavier scrap of mortar than usual fell, or there was a louder crack of a breaking lath, I tremblingly expected to hear the best bed-room door open, and then all would have been discovered.

A few moments sufficed for me to provide myself with cloak and hat, and then, passing through the opening, I was in poor Ann's arms.

Nature—woman's nature—said that we ought to cry and sob in each other's arms; but my stern purpose made me crush that down, and, hand in hand, we went softly to the door. Ann opened it, and we stood in the dark passage.

Not a word was spoken, but Ann went on first, and I followed closely. I was too much excited and hopeful now to feel much fear, though when a board creaked beneath our weight—a sound that would have passed unnoticed during the day—my heart

leaped, and I felt certain that we should be detected. Once I felt sure that I heard my father start up in bed, as if alarmed, and about to listen; but all remained still, and I was roused from my pause by the whisper of Ann repeating my name; for I had stopped on the instant, to remain like a statue, afraid to move from the creaking board.

"Quick, quick, Miss Jessie, we are heard!" exclaimed Ann just then.

And darting to my side, she passed her arm round me, just as I became aware of a flash of light; and turning sharply, there at the end of the passage, and holding a candle above her head to peer beneath it, was the figure of the stern, hard woman who had held me in custody.

CHAPTER X.

IT was for liberty, I knew; and, rapidly following Ann, we passed through a door at one end of the passage, and stood on the top step of the staircase; when, as if moved by some resolve, Ann darted back, and loudly thrust in a bolt that was at the top of the door, fortunately upon our side.

"Now, quick, Miss Jessie," she panted, "they will be all awake in a moment."

And we hurried down the stairs.

The truth of Ann's words was upon me before we reached the bottom, for I heard the top door tried, and then a loud knocking, as at a bed-room door, and a harsh voice calling—

"Mr. Wynne, Mr. Wynne."

"Let her call, miss, if we can only get the street door open."

"But is the key in, Ann?" I exclaimed.

And a cold chill struck me, as the thought occurred that for safety it might have been taken out.

We were at the entrance hall, we had crossed it, the first bolt was shot back—the second—and then Ann was struggling with the heavy bar, for the key was in.

But that bar! It stuck, it seemed immovable; till, with a sudden wrench, Ann dashed it down, and it fell, hanging by one end, but making a clangour that was fearful.

"Quick, Ann, quick!" I whispered.

For I could hear a crashing noise, as of some one trying to force open the staircase door.

"I can't be quick, Miss Jessie," she panted, "for this key— There, at last!" she exclaimed aloud, as the door yielded. "Now, miss, through with you."

And the next moment, just as we heard voices on the stairs, it closed behind us with a bang; while, bounding down the steps, we turned swiftly to the right, and ran.

There was no time to think of what I had done: the excitement swept all that away. The step was taken, and all we had to think of now was the obtaining of shelter. My first thought, then, was to reach Mr. Moore, the only friend to whom I could look in this time of need.

But we were not to reach his house that night; for the loud shouting of a party of sailors, down the street in our front, alarmed me so, that at once we turned off, and, making for the north, walked swiftly until the town was far behind.

Perhaps it was as well; for, imagining that Mr.

Moore's would be the spot to which I should flee, my father and the woman hurried to Stephen Ellerby, aroused him, and together they went to the old house in the High-street, where they would have been able to seize us before we could have gained entrance.

But that was a weary night—wandering on, hour after hour, shunning every soul who approached, till the sluggish morning came, when we cautiously made for Mr. Moore's, to find him standing at the door.

"I have been expecting you, little one," he said, kindly, as he took me in his arms. "Why, you're cold—starved. I thought you would make for this old cage, my little birdie, so I've got ready seed and water."

"But have they been looking for us, Mr. Moore?"

"There, I thought it was all nonsense," he said, laughing. "You are no more mad than I am. Mad woman wouldn't ask such a sane question. I suppose we both are, though, eh, little one, for indulging in our northern schemes? Yes, they've been; but they are not going to have you."

I pressed his hand by way of thanks, and found that he had a warm fire and breakfast ready for us, taking me close up to the glow, and tending me as if I had been a child, till, utterly worn out, I fell asleep, and must have slept for hours before I awoke, to find Ann at my side, and Mr. Moore standing very seriously in front.

"Awake, little one? Just in time. Captain Pash and Solly and old B'unyee are below. You had better come and see them; for I'm sorry to say that they bring bad news."

I did not ask what that news might be, but followed him down to where the three men were waiting our arrival; and Captain Pash hurried towards me, speaking earnestly.

"Tisn't my fault, Miss Wynne, indeed. I can't make it out; because they were all so willing and pleased, and the wife's been making all sorts of preparations."

"And we should have been ready a couple of days sooner than I expected," broke in Mr. Solly, the mate.

"By the way, my dear, I had not said a word to these gentlemen about your troubles at home," said Mr. Moore to me. "I was not quite sure how matters were going, and I was in hopes that things would come all right in the end."

"But what do they mean? What hindrance is there to prevent our going? Pray don't keep me in suspense," I said.

When old Brunyee spoke—

"Here, I'll tell you what it is; and if I loses my ship I can't help it. It's all along of young Master Stephen, who gets us all together, and he says, says he, 'My men,' he says, 'do you know what you're about? Of course you don't, though,' he says; 'for look here, you're going to put to sea with a mad woman on board—a poor creature as has gone daft; and I ask you fairly,' he says, 'did you ever hear of a ship coming to any good as had a mad woman on board?'"

"No, nor harm nayther," I says; and he glared at me like a wild beast.

"But it had an effect on our chaps, who shuffled about like a set of helpless babies as they are, and hauled in slack, and rubbed their heads; and old Deaf Burke, as had never heard a word, says, to make himself look knowing—for he can't abear to be thought deaf—'Right you are, sir.'"

"'There,' says Master Stephen, 'you are, I see, wise men. I don't want to play upon your superstitions, but I do think it would be folly to go to sea like that. The vessel shall not sail.'"

"Just then Cheesey—that's him as shied his cap about, you know—he says, 'But is the lady mad? 'cause she looked too nyste-looking.' When Master Stephen he puts his hanky to his eyes, and that showed me as he was a humbuggin', and it set my back up, miss; and I let go at the men for a set of cowardly Tom-cat-fearing lubbers, till Master Stephen orders me out of the place; and away I bounced, and went and told the capen here and Master Solly, and that's all."

"No, that's not all, miss," said Captain Pash; "for they all came down to my quarters half an hour after, and swore as they wouldn't sail if you went."

"One and all of 'em," said Mr. Solly, bringing his fist down on the table with a bang.

"But, indeed, I am not mad, Mr. Pash," I said, earnestly, as I smiled at the poor fellows' ignorance.

"No, miss, I don't see that you are—only my name's Capen, not Mr."

"I beg your pardon, captain."

"It's all right, miss; only, as it's very hard to put capen to your name, when it belongs you like to see it there. And as to your being mad, why, if you was, what then—what difference would it make?"

"Hear, hear!" said Mr. Solly.

"Ah, what difference would it make!" cried the old boatswain.

"I can't say," continued the captain, "as I'd care to go afloat in a craft as had a black Tom cat aboard; but, as to a woman as is not quite right in the upper storey, that's all nonsense—eh, Sol?"

"Right, quite right," said the mate.

"But then Mr. Ellerby's played upon the men that way, so what more can be done?" said Mr. Moore, anxiously—"can't we get another crew together?"

"Not as would be worth a rap to us, sir," said the captain.

"Then what's to be done?" asked Mr. Moore, anxiously, looking round till his eye fell upon old Brunyee.

"Well, if you asks me, sir, I'll soon tell you what's to be done. I'd work the lubbers; and if I couldn't do it no other way, I'd hoccus the lot, and carry 'em aboard. But, look here, Capen Pash; if you've got your ship out at sea, and a current comes and carries her a way you don't want her to go, what do you do?"

"Clap on sail," growled the mate.

"To be sure you do; you bring something stronger to work the other way, don't you? Well, here's Master Stephen Ellerby's your current, and he's carrying the men one way; and here's Miss Wynne here, as can come like a cloud of sail and carry 'em all t'other way. Who's strongest, d'yer think, eh? Why, them chaps there are as soft as stock oakum tar under the line, and she'll sweep 'em along like—

there, hang me, if I know how she won't sweep 'em along!"

"Bravo, Brunyee! You ought to have been a diplomatist," said Mr. Moore, delightedly, as he slapped him on the back.

"What's that 'ere, eh?" said Brunyee. "Some gammon, I dessay; but I'd rayther be a purser. Look here, though, gents, you get the men together and set the lady at 'em, and there, it's all done—she can take 'em aboard with her, and once we gets 'em aboard, why, it's Capen Pash and Mr. Solly's fault if they gets alongside of Master Stephen again."

Old Brown.

IT not unfrequently occurs that a man who has for many years been an inveterate poacher turns gamekeeper, when, being acquainted with all their tricks and dodges, he becomes the terror of his old companions.

This was the case with Brown, now Lord E——'s trusty keeper, who, in his younger days, was the first in many a raid on those very preserves he now guards with so much ingenuity. He was nephew to the late guardian; and knowing that the latter went every Saturday to the nearest market town, Brown made a practice of seeing him well on his way, when, returning to the lodge, he furnished himself with powder, shot, and gun, and went forth to shoot the hares and pheasants of his unsuspecting relative.

In this way he for some time enjoyed the pleasures of the chase, in addition to dinners of game almost every day in the week, without having to purchase his own ammunition; but, as time went on, discoveries became frequent; and getting tired of the police summonses, now no longer rare, he applied for the post left vacant by the death of his uncle, and obtained it.

On the day of the poacher's entry into his new duties, he counted up the actions that had been brought against him, which he found amounted in all to forty-five. He swore then to bring twice as many against his late associates, and kept his oath, having recourse to the most ingenious stratagems to effect his purpose. Some of them are worth recording, and the following is one of the cleverest:—

It was in winter, and the ground was covered with snow, when Brown took his way across the open country to the preserves, wearing a white paper cap, and having a sheet wrapped around him. He carried with him a broom and the paw of a hare.

Attired in this somewhat unusual manner, he traversed the snow-clad common in the direction he knew by experience the hares were wont to take to enter the wood. As he went, he made in the snow exact imitations of the tracks of a hare, obliterating his own footprints with the broom, until he reached a bush, behind which he awaited the result of his plan.

For some time he remained motionless, but at last his patience was rewarded; peering from his hiding place he saw a man approaching, following the deceptive footprints of the hare. He did not discover his mistake until he came face to face with the

keeper, who was chuckling to himself over the success of his *ruse*.

Brown, however, had other plots hatching for the downfall of the poachers. One day he stopped at an inn, as he was passing, for a glass of beer, and mentioned incidentally that his master had sent for him to London on the following day. When the morning came, he got up on the coach, and rode for a mile or two, when he descended, and in an hour was back in the preserves, accompanied by two policemen.

Another time he had a bad attack of rheumatism, and lay in bed groaning, and declaring that he should not be able to get up again for weeks. However, he was sufficiently recovered to go out in a few hours, for the next day there were two or three poaching cases heard by the nearest magistrate.

Shortly afterwards, a nephew of Lord E——, having run down from town for a few days' sport, hearing of the new keeper's exploits, laughingly informed old Brown that he should go and have some shooting in his preserves the very next day, and, confident of his own ability to elude pursuit, defied the keeper to take him. He set out, accordingly, in the morning, with a gun, and, taking a good look round, decided that he was safe, for there was no one in sight, save an old woman coming out of the wood, carrying under her arm a bundle of sticks, which she had been gathering.

"Hallo! old lady," said he, "did you see Brown, the keeper, in the wood?"

"Brown?—the old villain's miles away, sir," said the old woman, "or I shouldn't be able to get these few bits of sticks."

As she spoke, a hare darted between the sportsman's legs; he fired on the instant, killed it, and was stepping forward to pick it up, when, to his great astonishment and chagrin, the old woman threw off her bonnet and cloak, and displayed the grinning countenance of the wily keeper.

Here is one more example of his ingenuity. Lord E—— had a bad piece of clover, enclosed within the grounds of a neighbour, who obstinately refused to buy it.

"He doesn't mean to relieve us of that clover field, I see," said Brown, one day. "Well, before the week's out he will come and beg us to let him have it, as sure as my name's Dick Brown."

And so the awkward owner did, in consequence of the following occurrence. He had made up a large shooting party one day, and Brown, who was aware of it, stationed himself in the centre of the enclosed field, firing at intervals, and after each shot picking up a hare or partridge.

"All the game in the county seems to be in that bit of land," said one of the sportsmen. "We had better go there."

"That is impossible," said the gentleman. "I am sorry to say it is not mine."

"Why, you ought to secure it at any price," said the other.

And the very next day the land was handed over to him, thanks to Brown, who had killed a stuffed partridge and hare at least a dozen times in half an hour.

Lord and Lady Byron at Home.

"I CALLED on Lord Byron to-day, with an introduction from Mr. Gifford.

"Here, again, my anticipations were mistaken. Instead of being deformed, as I had heard, he is remarkably well built, with the exception of his feet; instead of having a thin and rather sharp and anxious face, as he has in his pictures, it is round, open, and smiling; his eyes are light, and not black; his air easy and careless, not forward and striking; and I found his manners affable and gentle, the tones of his voice low and conciliating, his conversation gay, pleasant, and interesting in an uncommon degree.

"I stayed with him about an hour and a half, during which the conversation wandered over many subjects.

"At last I turned the conversation to his own poems, and particularly to his 'English Bards,' which he has so effectually suppressed that a copy is not easily to be found.

"He said he wrote it when he was very young and very angry, which, he added, were 'the only circumstances under which a man would write such a satire.' When he returned to England, he said, Lord Holland, who treated him with very great kindness, and Rogers, who was his friend, asked him to print no more of it, and therefore he had suppressed it. Since then, he said, he had become acquainted with the persons he had satirized, and whom he then knew only by their books—was now the friend of Moore, the correspondent of Jeffrey, and intimate with the Wordsworth school, and had a hearty liking for them all, especially as they did not refuse to know one who had so much abused them.

"While I was there Lady Byron came in. She is pretty, not beautiful, for the prevalent expression of her countenance is that of ingenuousness. 'Report speaks goldenly of her.'

"She is a baroness in her own right, has a large fortune, is rich in intellectual endowments, is a mathematician, possesses common accomplishments in an uncommon degree, and adds to all this a sweet temper.

"She was dressed to go and drive, and, after stopping a few moments, went to her carriage.

"Lord Byron's manner to her was affectionate. He followed her to the door, and shook hands with her, as if he were not to see her for a month."—*Life, Letters, and Journals of G. Ticknor.*

Bigamy.

'TWIXT Sue and Jane I wavered long,

Since both I could not wive;

But now to Susan I belong,

While each remains alive.

A flippant friend upbraids me when

I of my choice complain:

"Why growl, you greediest of men,

Is not your Sue a *gêne*?"

AN editor mildly alludes to his rival as "a reservoir of falsehood and an aqueduct of mendacity."

"The Quaint Treatise on Flies."

MR. W. H. ALDAM, now of Belmont, Twickenham, has recently brought out one of the most elegant and unique works pertaining to the art of angling which was ever produced. It is termed "The Quaint Treatise on Flies," and quaint indeed it is, and invaluable in every way. The illustrations are truly excellent, and are executed in the first style of lithography. The descriptive letterpress is lucid and comprehensive; and copied, as it is, from the diary of an old angler of the last century, one cannot help perusing it with feelings of genuine pleasure.

Mr. Aldam deserves the utmost thanks of every angler in the United Kingdom, not only for his practical knowledge of the subject on which he treats, but for the unwearied patience he has bestowed in amassing so many materials for the work, the excellent taste displayed in mounting and tying the various individual artificial flies, and the methodical arrangement of the feathers and silk of which they are composed.

No one, indeed, except a person endowed with an immense amount of enthusiasm, could have compiled such a work of labour and love. It will doubtless be read and pondered over with delight by many a tyro intent on great things, as well as those in "the sere and yellow leaf," and whose "years of liberty" by lake and rivers are never likely to be realized again.

The book, with its stores, is a grand contribution to angling literature, and will doubtless grace many a drawing-room table, and be scanned by delicate hands, who, if not fascinated by the "gentle art," may be so by this insight into the arcana and mystery of the making of artificial flies, and ply those fingers deftly in careful imitation, for the behoof of their brothers, cousins, and lovers.

The happy results of the work must assuredly be the work of a lifetime—contributions for the materials having been levied upon birds, from the tail feathers of the common jenny wren (more than 1,000 feathers) to the hackles of the jungle cock of India, including a similar number of feathers from the almost extinct dotterel; feathers from the young grouse or moor-fowl, only obtainable during about ten days in the season; the peewit gull, the different sea-swallows, including the lovely roseate tern, to say nothing of the dun hen feathers, the four different feathers from the woodcock, three from the partridge, &c. We are fully aware that when feathers are to be got by netting, like starlings, the trouble is not so great; but in birds only to be taken or shot singly, like jenny wrens, a commission for 2,000 feathers of the latter is not easily accomplished. Furs of various kinds, from the silver sable of the Tasmanian opossum to the silver seal of Lapland, have all been requisitioned.

The work may be had of the author, the subscription copies being three guineas; but what advance upon that price is charged to the general public we do not know. The work could never have been brought out under three times that charge, had it not been for the high reputation of its author bringing an extremely liberal list of patrons.

News from San Francisco.

THE following appears in the *San Francisco News Letter*:—

"The town crier is instructed to return the grateful thanks of the proprietor of this paper to the gentleman who kindly sent us a present the large cream-coloured bull-dog on Tuesday last. He is also desired to say that our gratitude will at once receive an immediate accession if the philanthropist alluded to will have the goodness to call and remove his canine testimonial at an early hour to-day.

"The following verbatim diary of the official record of this animal, as an *attaché* of the *News Letter*, compiled by our printer's devil, and which he is willing to swear to if necessary, will explain conclusively the pressing reasons we have for desiring his immediate removal:—

"Tuesday: Tied the nu dog Jim to the leg of editur's desk, bit editur, he kicked me, tied him to reporters table, and then he did too. He et a stake."

"Wednesday: Jim killed our other dog, bite Mikel Rese who kem in to luke at 'im, et a stake, then the fourman's lunch, bit fourman."

"Thursday: Bit two men, and a boy who wanted to pay for a 'add,' editur kicked me, wish some one wud kil editur. Jim et another cat, likewise a stake."

"Friday: Bit me, kiled another dog."

"He's in the cole box, growlin'. Everybody is swering, can't get no cole, all hans freezin', bit fourman, editur up on buk case four hours."

"The above speaks for itself."

FIRE AND LIFE INSURANCE.—A certain Dutchman, owner of a small house, had effected an insurance on it of £800, although it had been built for much less. The house was burned down, and the Dutchman then claimed the full amount for which it had been insured; but the officers of the company refused to pay more than its actual value, about £600. He expressed his dissatisfaction in powerful broken English, interlarding his remarks with some choice Teutonic oaths. "If you wish it," said the actuary of the insurance company, "we will build you a house larger and better than the one burned down, as we are positive it can be done for even less than £600." To this proposition the Dutchman objected, and at last was compelled to take £600. Some weeks after he had received the money, he was called upon by the same agent, who wanted him to take out a policy of life insurance on himself or his wife. "If you insure your wife's life for £2,000," the agent said, "and she should die, you will have the sum to solace your heart." "Donner and blitzen!" exclaimed the Dutchman, "you 'surance fellows ish all tiefs! If I insure my wife, and my wife dies, and if I goes to de office to get my £2,000, do I gets all de money? No, not quite. You vill say to me, 'She vasn't worth £2,000; she vas vorth about £600. If you don't like de £600, we will give you a bigger and better wife!'"

The Egotist's Note-book.

THE humour is on me this week for retailing anecdotes, so here are a few:—

Rossini, the composer, was one day just finishing the score of a new opera, when a visitor was announced.

"Tell him," said Rossini to his servant—"tell him I'll be with him in an instant, for I'm just at my last gasp."

Two miserly young men, returning from the cemetery where they have been visiting the grave of their father, who had left to each of them a large fortune—

Tom, whose conscience, in spite of his meanness, troubles him occasionally: "Don't you think father's grave is in a shocking condition?"

Will: "Not at all, Tom. Remember, our father was a man of very simple tastes."

A gentleman, the other day, took his little boy to a model farm—say Mr. Mechi's—to see the wonders of the place. After they had been there a short time, the little fellow ran crying to his father, being at the same time pursued by a big turkey-cock, which was trying to get a piece of bread out of his hand.

"What, my boy," said the father, "are you afraid of a turkey? Why, you ate part of one yesterday."

"Yes, papa," responded the little fellow, wiping his eyes; "but this one isn't cooked!"

In the pit of a West-end theatre:—

Stranger to his neighbour: "Who's that pretty girl at the front of the stage?"

Rather elderly neighbour: "Twenty years ago, sir, it was me. Now it's my daughter."

On the morning after a ball which was recently given at the house of a distinguished politician, the latter called his son to him, and said—

"You know I intended you for a diplomatic career. I invited a Minister Plenipotentiary last evening, and he hadn't been here long before he discovered you saying silly nothings to his wife. Sir, you will never be anything better than a—Secretary of Legation."

An advocate went to visit his client, who was in prison, waiting to be tried on a charge of robbery. The prisoner, in describing his case, and protesting his entire innocence, was overcome with emotion, and wept piteously. At the end of the interview, as the advocate was leaving the cell, he turned round, and holding the handle of the door, remarked naïvely to the prisoner—

"Above all, don't forget to cry like that when you appear before the jury."

Jones, meeting Brown, who has a decided tendency to obesity—

"I say, Brown, you are getting too round. You must try and flatten your waistcoat a bit."

To which Brown, with a sorrowful air, responded—"My dear fellow, I'm doing all I can. I live almost entirely on *flat fish*."

This reminds one of the story of the gentleman who, in describing his dining-room, said—

"The ceiling is so low that we can only eat flat fish in the room."

The following story is told as an instance of feminine devotion:—

A little girl was apparently suffering from a bad cough, and her mother, who became anxious about it, persuaded her to take a spoonful of cod-liver oil twice a day, giving her a penny each time as an inducement. One morning the cough suddenly ceased, and the patient firmly declined to take any more medicine.

"No, mother," said she, "it's brother Freddy's birthday to-morrow, and I've saved enough money to make him a nice little present."

"I'm told that you are going into partnership with Tomkins," said Smith to Jones, on meeting him in Piccadilly. "Is it true?"

"Yes," replied Jones.

"And how much do you put into the business?"

"Nothing at all. I give my experience, and Tomkins furnishes the capital. Our partnership is for five years. At the end of that period, Tomkins will have gained my experience, and I shall have secured his capital."

At the beginning of the Servian war, General Tchernayeff complained of want of information respecting the positions and conditions of his troops. One morning an officer informed him that they had captured a Turkish spy.

"Bring him in," said the general, rather sarcastically, "I should like to hear some news of my army."

"What sort of books, ma'am, shall I send you?" inquired a well-known bookseller of a customer, the wife of a rich merchant.

"Well," replied the lady, "I don't care what kinder books they are, so long as the bindin's match the new libery carpet."

Here is a humorous story of two eminent Northerners. One day the late Dr. Gibson entered an omnibus in which Dr. Macleod was already seated. Dr. Gibson had delivered, a few days before, an anti-Union speech, which contended so strongly for the Establishment principle that people thought he was preparing for a return to the old church. When he entered the omnibus, Dr. Macleod said—

"Well, Dr. Gibson, is there any truth in the rumour that you are coming back to be with us?"

"God forbid!" exclaimed Dr. Gibson, in horror.

To which Dr. Macleod responded—

"That's exactly what I cried when I heard of it!"

A gentleman, the other day, came rushing to a doctor, who was of a somewhat nervous and excitable temperament—

"Oh, doctor," said he, "my friend has been bitten by a dog which, I believe, is mad. What is to be done?"

"To be done?" replied the doctor, whose ideas were a little confused—"shoot your friend, and keep an eye on the dog!"

During the discussion and agitation in reference to the charges made by the Eton boarding masters, I had occasion to search some old mouldy documents in reference to scholastic matters, and exhumed the following in reference to the education of the illustrious Lord Chatham:—

"Mr. William Pitt, his bill, Eton, 1719.

	£	s.	d.
Paid at ye house where Mr. Willm. was when he fell down	13	6	
Paid for man and horse to go with me	3	0	
Paid for shaze	5	0	
Paid to the surgeon for attendances, bleeding, &c.	2	2	0
To the other surgeon for going to visit him	1	1	0
2 pr. of stockings	6	6	
Paid for curing his chilbranes	5	0	
For money to the master	1	6	
School sweeping	0	8	
Chapell	0	4	
Water	1	3	
Share of fire in his chamber to Easter	10	0	
6 pound of candles	3	6	
A pair of garters	0	4	
Half a year's cleaning shoes to Midsr.	5	0	
Worsted and thread to mend his linen and stockings	1	0	
Hatter's bill	1	8	
Barber (a quarter)	7	6	
Taylor's bill	3	6	
Shoomaker's bill	19	6	
Bookseller's bill	1	11	6
Writing master (halfe a year, August 7th)	1	2	0
To Mr. Burchett (halfe a year's tuition)	4	4	0
To Mr. Good (halfe a year's teaching)	2	2	0
To halfe a year's board, due August 6th, 1719	12	10	0

Total. . . . £29 1 3"

Dear boy! How his hair must have grown, and what "chilbranes" he must have had!

The following, giving as it does the opinion of the fair sex on modest swains, may amuse and encourage those gentlemen:—In a rural district of Forfarshire, a young ploughman once went courting on a Saturday night. A preliminary interview with the object of his affection passed off successfully, and in due time he found himself seated with her by the fireside of the farmhouse kitchen. This was John's first appearance in this character, and as he and

the girl had had little previous acquaintance, he found himself sadly at a loss for something to say in order to begin a conversation from which he expected so much pleasure. In vain he racked his brain for some interesting topic; but he could call up no subject at all suitable for the occasion—not one sentence could he utter; and for two long hours he sat on, in silent despair. The girl herself was equally silent; she no doubt remembered the teaching of the old Scotch song, "Men maun be the first to speak," and she sat patiently regarding him with demure surprise. At last John suddenly exclaimed—

"Jenny, there's a feather on your apron!"

"I wadna ha'e wondered if there had been twa," replied Jenny; "for I've been sittin' aside a goose a' night!"

Some workmen were trying to get a chest of drawers up a very narrow staircase. After a great deal of tugging and pushing, they contrived to get it so completely jammed up that it could not be moved a single inch either backward or forward. At this juncture the lady of the house, who had been watching the proceedings with considerable apprehension, suddenly exclaimed, as if seized with a fit of inspiration—

"I see what'll do it. Take out the drawers!"

Two rather showily dressed men were disputing a few nights since at the bar of a well-known restaurant at the West-end—

"You don't know anything about it," said one to the other. "I tell you, the gaoler at S. was a tall man."

"And I say he was a short man."

"Well, I think I ought to know. When I was there, he was the man that had charge of me."

In the days of "good Queen Bess," they used to fix candlestick covers over the pulpits, to snuff out wordy-mouthed clerics who preached long sermons. In Wales, nowadays, they prefer strikes as a means of compulsion. The other day, the Roman Catholic pauper children at Bridgend Union intimated to the master of the workhouse that unless the hours for religious instruction were shortened they would all turn Protestants. What will the Pope say to this new example of "modern progress"?

Now that winter has come, and ladies are looking forward to many a pleasant evening spent in the enjoyment of the dance, they often forget the attendant fatigue, until the exhaustion of the following day reminds them that every pleasure has its alloy. This fatigue is in great measure produced by the tight ligature or garter with which the stockings are fastened, hindering the free circulation of the blood. Medical men are unanimous in declaring the use of garters to be a most fruitful source of disease. Every lady desiring health and comfort should at once provide herself with a pair of the new patent stocking suspenders, made by Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London. The price is only 3s. per pair, of any draper, or post free for two extra stamps.



100-111

Three Hundred Virgins.

A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS.

CHAPTER XV.—A MATRIMONIAL PROPOSITION.

HAD a serpent again stung her, Deborah Burrows could not have started from Helston more fiercely.

"You lie!" she said. "It is because I am not young and beautiful—because I am not dainty enough for your fine taste. Shame on you, that you should let me speak like I did—that you should win me to you, only that you may cast me off. But you don't mean it. Charles, dear Charles, I have woke up to a new life, and you will crush me down into desolation, where there is neither hope nor sunshine. Think of what I have said—of what my love might be—and don't turn me away."

"It is useless—I must be frank," said Helston, calmly. "Let this be a secret between us. You said I mocked at you—that it was because you were not young and beautiful. Deborah Burrows, I cannot love you; but I can and shall always think of you with respect."

"I ask him for bread, and he gives me a stone," moaned Deborah.

"Hush, hush!" he said. "You would not believe in me if I were unfaithful to one whom I feel that I love. Let us be friends, and try and make the life here one of peace for all."

He held out his hand, but she struck it down, the blow falling upon it heavily.

Then in a transport of passionate love, she caught the hand she had struck, and kissed it.

"Then we are to be friends?" he said, holding her hand in his.

"No!" she said, harshly.

And she dashed his hand away, and strode down the dell.

Helston stooped, and slung his satchel-strap across his shoulder, raised his gun, and followed, feeling as if a heavy load had been placed upon his spirits; till the fair, sweet face of Grace Monroe seemed to rise before him, and he strode rapidly along, following in the track of Deborah, who went recklessly on, blind almost with rage and mortification.

A holloa on the right taught them the direction in which their companions were waiting, and Deborah seemed instinctively to make for this, followed at a distance by Helston.

"Hallo, old fellow," said Laurent, "why, where did you get to?"

And he looked anxiously at his friend.

"I might ask you the same question. But what have you found?"

"A few fruits, one snake, and a stream swarming with fish. And you?"

"Green woods and ferns—nothing more."

Very little more passed till they reached the ship, where those who stayed were eager to hear the news; and in the course of the evening, it fell out that Grace Monroe was standing with Mary, leaning over the side and watching the glorious hues in the sky, when Thello was surrounded by a group of inquiring damsels—the black's good humour

making him a general favourite; while, for his part, he was willing to do everything "for any ob de ladies who would not fro de taters at him."

"Tell me then, 'Thello,' said one of the girls, "was it true—did Mrs. Burrows go away into the woods alone with Mr. Helston?"

"I no say dat ar, at all," said Thello; "I nebbër say so, needer. I say—say—dat we go one way, and dey de oder, and that they bofe came out ob de wood togeder, dat's all."

"Well, all I can say is, that it looks very particular," said one of the girls.

"Yes, and she's been as different as possible towards him ever since the accident," said another.

"That's being a strong-minded woman," said a third.

"Heigho!" said a fourth, "I wish a ship would come and take us off."

"Or else bring us a cargo of husbands."

"Oh, here she comes," said the first speaker.

And Deborah Burrows came along the deck, Mary Dance heaving a sigh as Grace turned away and went towards the cabin.

Matters were growing awkward in Virgin Island, and Charles Helston wondered how it would end. He could not laugh at Deborah, for he saw the earnestness of the woman, and her love for him; but he was not prepared for the bitterness of her hatred.

She did not show it against him, for her manner towards him was quite calm and subdued; but she struck at him in his tenderest feelings; for, from the day of the adventure in the wood, persecution began for Grace Monroe, who avoided him more and more—treating him in so distant a manner that Helston began to tell himself that she could not care for him in the slightest degree.

Laurent, whose arm was now well knit together again, was not without his tribulation, for the natural result of their position on the island followed.

It would be no exaggeration to say that, of a given number of young girl emigrants bound for the south, fully two-thirds go with the expectation of finding a good home and a husband amongst the settlers. Certainly it was so amongst the passengers of the *Zenobia*; and now that their journey was so strangely interrupted, and that, as far as they could see, they might be prisoners on the island for life, more than one began—to use the homely old phrase—to set their caps at their companions of the opposite sex.

Mary Dance was not long before she began to grow wroth, and to look daggers at Laurent; for, said she—

"I'll never believe but what he gives them encouragement. They would never talk as they do, if he did not."

Stranger still, a change began to take place in 'Thello.

Both Helston and Laurent noticed it with some amazement; for, instead of neglecting his personal appearance, as might have been anticipated in such an out-of-the-way place, 'Thello began to bestow a great deal of attention upon the natural charms of his person.

Notably, 'Thello shaved very regularly, and made

himself a large quantity of pomatum, with which he liberally anointed his woolly hair, torturing himself tremendously in his efforts to brush or comb it into order, when it arbitrarily refused to alter its habit. He was very particular in his dress, too, and caused no end of amusement amongst the women by his dandyfied airs; for he had helped himself to some of the captain's garments, and after the culinary efforts of the day were at an end, 'Thello used to dress, and promenade the sands in the cool of the evening.

"Why, 'Thello," said Laurent one evening, "what does all this dressing out mean? Any one would think you were going visiting."

"Well, you see, Mass' Laurent," he said, "times is altered, sah. Dere are a many ladies on board de ship, and dis chile tink 'um not speckful to go 'bout not looking to de best advantage. Why you no dress, sah?"

"Dress?" said Laurent, laughing. "No, I dress quite well enough."

"I no tink so, sah. In dis 'culiar position, where de toder sect try to get de 'vantage ob de men, I tink we should show ourself to de berry best. You look all froo nature, sah, and you see de cock bird and de him animal always got de finess colours, and look grand, while de hen only dowdy, 'tupid-looking, an' little."

"So you try to embellish nature, 'Thello," said Helston, smiling.

"Yes, sah: In dis here situation, sah, de genlum ought make de bess of tings. You tink we always tay here, sah?"

"I can see no chance of escape," said Helston.

And Laurent shook his head.

"Den, sah, de bess ting we do is to make de bess ob de case."

"Yes, 'Thello, that's what we must do," said Helston; "though I doubt whether we shall be able to live, unless we contrive better means of getting fish."

"Kedge fis, sah?" said 'Thello—"ah, you top a bit, I see to dat. I make you long net, and we kedge thousands. But, sah—why not now begin to tink ob de ladies?"

"Think of the ladies?" said his listeners together.

"Yes, sah; tink ob de ladies. We come to sab-bage land, we do as sabbage land people do."

"What the deuce are you driving at?" said Laurent.

"Dribing at, sah? Iyah—iyah—iyah! I tink, sah, it time we all tink ob gettun married, sah."

"Getting married?"

"Yes, sah. I keep de wedder eye open, and I see de lubbly Ma'am Burrows fall in love wid Mass' Helston here."

"Thello!"

"Oh, sah, it no use you look black. I see um, sure nuff, and twenty—thirty more lubbly creaturs frow de eye at mass' doctor, sah, and want him to feel de pulse. I-yah—i-yah—i-yah! Mass' Laurent, too! I-yah—i-yah—i-yah! I see um—dozen ob dem want to fall in lub wid de mate. Dey want um mate. Yah—i-yah—i-yah!"

"Ah, and some of them have taken a fancy to your sable highness, I suppose," said Laurent, glancing at Helston.

"De sable highness. What dat, sah? You mean de pretty creature fall in lub wid dis chile, sah?"

"Yes," said Laurent, smiling.

"Yes, sah; 'sure you, sah, it quite painful. I no tink ob such ting, sah, 'sure you, till dey put it in um head. Yes, sah, plenty take fancy to 'Thello, sah."

"Indeed," said Laurent.

"Yes, sah. So I tink, sah, dat better dan we tree quarrel, and kick up bobbory about de women, we 'vide 'em 'tween us. Tree hundred, sah, dat one hundred 'piece, and mass' doctor here have the first choice."

"Why, you black rascal," said Laurent, indignantly, "you've got a wife in London."

"No, sah, no such ting," said 'Thello, with much dignity. "Dis chile, sah, single genlum, sah—dough dat not matter; 'cause if him nebber get away from dis island, him ought to marry again."

"'Thello, you're mad," said Laurent, seriously. "Your proposition is absurd. If you like one of the women, and she likes you, why I don't see that there would be any harm in your being married. We should only carry out the laws of the country from which we came, and enforce them all. Your marriage could be solemnized again when we reached civilization."

"Marry one ob dem, sah?" said 'Thello. "Den what I say to de oder fifty who take fancy to dis chile?"

"Why, you conceited old humbug," said Laurent, "do you think any one of them would have you?"

"Well, sah, dey take de bit in um teefe ebber since Ma'am Deborah preach 'bout rights ob women. Why, ebber so many nearly make de proposal to me; and den see how dey all smile on mass' doctor here, and on you, Mass' Laurent, sah. I tink what I say right, sah; but if you two genlum's bit jealous of dark genlum, sah, he be quite 'tent wiff fifty."

CHAPTER XVI.—A NEW MOVE.

THE division did not take place, as may be supposed; but 'Thello's words set the two men thinking. They had both been so occupied with their love for Grace and Mary that it had been, as it were, an armour of proof, from which many a tender glance had flashed off without effect. They had both been light-hearted and cheerful with the girls, and had felt glad to find them so willing to follow out their advice for the well-being of the strange colony; but these words of 'Thello seemed to take a veil from their eyes, so that they saw matters in a very different light.

That very afternoon, while ashore, Laurent followed Mary and Grace, who, with a party of women, had gone about a mile inland, to a place they had christened "the Orchard," to gather the fruit from a kind of plum tree—"Thello being deputed to go with them, and, armed with gun and revolver, act as a guard.

At this time, in spite of the earnest prayer of Laurent, the signal-flag still remained down, and there was nothing to attract the notice of a passing vessel.

Laurent came up with the party straggling about amongst the bushes, and he felt annoyed as he saw

bright look after bright look animate the faces of the girls he spoke to and questioned about their success. Under the circumstances, he felt that he could not ask where Mary Dance was; so he walked on, to find her at last alone with Grace Monroe, both looking hot and flushed with their exercise, but handsomer than he thought he had ever seen them before.

Here was his opportunity, and he determined to speak to Mary; for his chances on board were very few.

He had approached very near before he was observed, and then Grace uttered an exclamation, as he went up to her with extended hand.

"Just in time to help," he said, lightly.

And then his heart sank, as he saw his hand left untouched, while a cold look came over the faces of both the fruit gatherers.

"Have I offended you, Miss Monroe?" he said, earnestly. "Mary Dance, you will shake hands with me?" he said, as she gave him a short nod, and turned away.

"Why should I, Mr. Laurent?" she said, shortly. "Because I believed we were very dear friends," he said.

And he stood looking at the firm, bright, animated countenance before him.

"You were mistaken, then," said Mary, shortly. "Grace, let us join the others."

"Miss Monroe," said Laurent, piteously, "stay for a few moments. Perhaps she will then hear me, or will tell me how I have offended her, whom I have tried to make my dearest friend."

Grace glanced at Mary, who said, sharply—

"Mr. Laurent has so many dearest friends that he can very well spare me."

"You wrong me, Mary," said Laurent, warmly.

"Do I?" she said, tauntingly. "Well, never mind, you will soon get over it. There's Jane Granger with a heavy basket, and Ellen Bray close beside her, loaded like a bee. Go and help one of them—both dear friends of yours."

"Indeed, beyond the simplest word of civility, nothing has ever passed between us," said Laurent.

"They talk very differently," said Mary Dance, sharply, "and so do a dozen more. But come, Grace, let us go."

"Indeed, you are mistaken," said Laurent, earnestly. "Miss Monroe, say a kind word for me. She has been so hard and bitter lately, while my every thought has been of her."

"Just the same as Mr. Helston's has been of Miss Monroe, here," said Mary, angrily. "Shame on you both! You take advantage of your position, both of you, and it's disgraceful. Ah, here is Mr. Helston."

Grace caught her arm, and the two were hurrying away; but the configuration of the ground enforced a meeting, and at the end of a minute they were brought up, with Helston on one side and Laurent on the other.

Grace stood, with the flush upon her cheek giving way to a deadly pallor, as Helston drew near and offered his hand, with no better fate than had befallen his friend.

"It's of no use, Helston," said Laurent, bitterly.

"Some one has been poisoning their ears against us, and they prefer believing others to us."

"If we are poisoned against you," said Mary, sharply, "it is by your own actions. But come, Grace, let us go on board—here come the ladies these gentlemen intended to meet."

She took Grace Monroe's arm, and led her on, Helston making way for her to pass, frowning as he saw that she averted her gaze, while Deborah Burrows, followed by another of the women, came hastily up.

"Stop," said Deborah, sharply. "You, Grace Monroe, and you, Mary Dance, go straight on board the vessel, and stay there. Your liberty is stopped for a month."

Grace looked at her firmly, but made no answer. And Deborah continued, tauntingly—

"If you have no respect for your character, my good girl, I must have."

"Pray what has she done, Mrs. Burrows?" said Mary Dance, quietly. "I have seen nothing wrong."

"Of course not," said Deborah, spitefully. "You approve of these clandestine meetings in the woods, under the pretence of gathering fruit."

"Hush, don't speak," said Grace, earnestly—"don't reply to her."

She was too late; for, preserving a smiling face, Mary Dance's heart was throbbing fast as she said, with a low curtsy—

"We were under the impression that the example of the strong-minded Mrs. Deborah Burrows might be followed in every respect."

Deborah bit her lips, and glanced from one to the other; but she made no reply, only pointed down the track, and Grace and Mary were literally taken prisoners, and led off by half a dozen women.

"This is getting unbearable," exclaimed Helston, aloud. "Are we to suffer it?"

"If you stay in our society," said Deborah, coldly, "yes."

And she turned away, leaving the two young men gazing at one another.

"It is monstrous," said Helston, as soon as they were alone.

"But what can we do?" said Laurent, bitterly. "We might interfere; but our help is refused."

"Yes," said Helston; "and we cannot war upon women."

They struck into the wood, and made an exploring circuit, before returning to the shore late in the evening, feeling more and more satisfied that they had pretty well plumbed the place, and that there was nothing new to be discovered.

Here, though, a surprise awaited them; for on reaching the raft rope, the raft was by the vessel, and no notice was taken of their signals.

"What does this mean?" said Laurent.

And he hailed the ship, but without effect. There were women on the deck, but no one took the slightest notice of them.

"We shall have to swim for it," said Helston.

"And run the gauntlet of the sharks, eh? But what's that?"

A low, dull, groaning noise had met his ear, and he involuntarily cocked the gun he carried. The night was coming on fast, and anything at a dis-

tance of twenty yards was indistinct; but the noise continued.

"Can you make out what it is?" said Laurent, as they advanced cautiously with finger on trigger.

"It sounds to me like some animal—one of the pigs rooting about," replied Helston. "But look—what's that?"

He pointed to a dark heap, close up under a clump of cocoa trees, whose huge leaves were dimly seen against the sky.

"Look out," said Laurent, "it's moving; but don't fire till we see what it is."

"I think I know," said Helston, trying to make out the dark, heaving mass—"I think it is one of the serpents coiled round something which it has killed."

And they took a step forward.

It seemed a perilous task; for if it proved to be one of the serpents, the first warning of its movements might be that it had flung itself round one of them. But, trusting to the darkness, they went cautiously on, and were now within five yards of the trees.

"Heigh, yah, hoo, hum!" went the dark mass.

"Thello!" cried Helston and Laurent, in a breath.

"Iss, sah, Mass' Laurent, sah," cried the black, springing up. "Golly, how dark! I tink I been 'sleep."

"How is it you are ashore? And why is the raft drawn off?" said Helston, suspecting something wrong.

"Hy-yah, hy-yah, mass' doctor, sah. Dere been a big row, sah. Dat big bull-alligator woman fly all over de place, sah, and say she hab her own way, and not 'tand no man nonsense, sah; and—hy-yah, hy-yah, hy-yah!—she sent dis chile shore wiff lot ob tings, and den dey pull de boat away, but only send him back full of oder tings, and say we may make tent here, and nebber come aboard again."

"And what have you got here, then, 'Thello?" said Laurent, eagerly.

"Pare sail for tent, sah, and tarpauling, sah, and de beds out ob de cots, and a kettle to boil de water."

"Do you mean to say, then, that we are banished from the ship, 'Pollo?" said Helston.

"Dat, him, sah. De big buffler woman say 'No man folk here. Let 'em make de bess of him ashore.'"

Helston and Laurent stood gazing at each other in the dark for a few moments, and then the latter burst out laughing.

"What next?" he said.

"The next thing will be war," said Helston, quietly. "Three against three hundred—the game is getting too warm."

"Dat de ting, sah," said 'Thello, excitedly, "and 'vide de spoil."

"'Thello," said Laurent, "it's getting late. Let's make a tent."

YOUTH: "I should like to have my moustache dyed." Polite Barber: "Certainly; have you brought it with you?"

The Man in the Open Air.

A CHRISTMAS DISCOURSE ON BELLS.

I AM the man who received no invitation out to dine this Christmas. My dearest and best of friends forgot to send me a turkey; the chains in which it should have hung did not arrive; neither did the Parcels Delivery cart stop at my door with that Christmas hamper full of pleasant liquids; but, as I sat alone, smoking the pipe in which I sought consolation, late on the wintry air came the sounds of Christmas bells, setting me thinking of the past, till I took up my pen and wrote this discourse on bells in general, their symbols, styles, and sounds.

There is nothing which awakens more sympathetic or more opposite feelings than the various sounds of bells. The chiming of one set will carry us back to our childhood, summon up, as if by magic, thoughts and scenes deemed to have been altogether forgotten—sometimes feelings of absolute pain, renewing sorrow, or recalling subjects of fun and merriment, with all the surroundings of the occasion, so vividly as to make us marvel at the powers of the brain thus to retain, in some secret chamber, facts so trivial and of such little moment.

To me, however, even the merry chime of the village bells has a tinge of melancholy—of sadness, as I remember that the same music has played, from time to time, to senses, alas! now dead to their loudest echoes.

Time was in England when the chiming of bells at early morn awakened men, and bade them come to the house of God, and sing his praises. Oft has it, while floating on the breeze, wafted comfort to the sick one's sleepless bed, and dropped health from its wings upon the wearied soul. Often has the dying sinner—the stern, iron-hearted man, like William the Conqueror—been bent and softened, and made to feel or weep by the voices of these bells, which, to their seeming, rang with a thousand tongues, and every tongue with its own quiet say.

It is said that Napoleon, while riding one day over a battle-field, gazing stern and unmoved on the dying and the dead that strewed the ground about him, heard suddenly "those evening bells" strike up a merry peal. The Emperor paused to listen. His heart was softened. His memory was busy with the past. He was no longer the conqueror of Austerlitz, but the innocent, happy school-boy of Brienne. Dismounting from his horse, he seated himself on the stump of an old tree, and, to the astonishment of Rapp, who related the circumstance, burst into tears. "The rock was smitten, and the living waters came gushing from it."

Bourrienne corroborates the effect of this witchery upon the great warrior. He says the sound of bells produced upon Napoleon a singular effect. "When he was at Malmaison, and while walking on the Avenue leading to Ruel, how often has the booming of the village bells broken off the most interesting conversation. He stopped, lest the movement of our feet might cause the loss of a tone in a sound which charmed him. The influence, indeed, was so powerful that his voice trembled with emotion, while he said—

"That recalls to me the first days of my student life."

Who can imagine the conflict of feelings then excited in such a nature, and what other sound could have produced it? Yes, there must be some inscrutable influence in bell-metal thus to transform in a moment the would-be tyrant of the world into the once more dreaming—and how much happier—cadet.

Webster libelled the most exhilarating and the most affecting of measured sound when he said—

"Those flattering bells,
One sound at wedding and at funeral."

And in joy or in sorrow, in youth and in age,

"The dream of the village chimes,
Which in youth we loved to hear"

(Moore) accompanies us, like songs of delight, through the land of our pilgrimage.

It is to this cause we may attribute the extraordinary delusion mentioned by Mr. Kinglake, the author of "Eöthen":—

"Falling asleep, under a blazing sun, in the desert, I was awakened by the sound of my native bells (Marlow-on-Thames). They seemed to be ringing for church. I attributed the effect to the great heat of the sun, the perfect dryness of the clear air through which I moved, and the deep stillness of all around me. It seemed to me that these causes, by occasioning a great tension and consequent susceptibility of the hearing organs, had rendered them liable to tingle under the passing of some mere memory that must have swept across my brain in a moment of sleep. Since my return to England, it has been told me that like sounds had been heard at sea, and that the sailor, becalmed under a vertical sun in the midst of the wide ocean, has listened in trembling wonder to the chime of his own village bells."

Southey says that, so far are church bells from having one sound on all occasions, they carry a different import on the same to different ears and different minds.

Indeed, so great is the power of bells to create emotion, that I doubt whether even the voice of a mother would so immediately subdue to tenderness the worst criminal in Norfolk Island, as the sudden sound of the peal of his native village—not remonstrative in its tone, to stir the pride; not complaining, to wound anew the harassed spirit; but, from its very unaltered sweetness and irrepressible revocations, utterly overpowering to his guilt-laden heart.

Cowper, in enumerating the causes of great regret which embittered the solitude of Alexander Selkirk on his desert island, makes him pathetically and naturally complain that—

"The sound of the church-going bell
These valleys and rocks never heard."

Divested of superstitious views, the parish bells are still interesting, from their association with the feelings of the mourning and the happy, as well as from that peculiar and touching music, which

"Opens all the cells
Where memory slept."

Mr. D. Urquhart, in his "Pillars of Hercules," says:—

"There are a dozen great bells in the Guedla, of Seville, which send forth the most discordant and unceasing peals, and the ringing of them is a strange exhibition. They are swung round and round—the rope is allowed to coil itself round the neck, or is jerked on the lip of the bell, and the ringer springs up by stanchions in the wall to get a purchase, and then throws himself down; or he allows himself to be carried by the rope as it swings round outside. As I entered the gallery, I saw one of the ringers thrown out, as I imagined, and expected, of course, that he was dashed on the pavement below. I saw him the next moment perched on the bell, smiling at my terror."

An old French writer says:—

"The love of Christian people for bells is ancient, touching, and to be respected, for it contains its source, derives its origin, in the heart of man from the earliest infancy. All Catholic people have loved bells, because they—the bells—take an active part in family joys and griefs. When, by brilliant flourishes, they have celebrated the joys and triumphs of our brothers admitted to the celestial dwelling, taking more plaintive accents, they implore the ransom for those buried in the gulfs of oblivion, and one cannot resist their pathetic influence. The warrior who is electrified by the cannon, yet cherishes this thundering or plaintive voice of the bronze which sings his victories, or solicits prayers for those heroes early reaped on the field of honour. At the sound of the bell, Napoleon inclined his noble forehead, and fell into a profound reverie. Besides, who would not be touched by a philosophic emotion in listening to the plaintive ringing of the bells, which have discoursed to the world, by turns, of public and private events."

A tourist in the Tyrolean Alps writes:—"The bell-ringing, as the companion of the thunderstorm, is a permanent institution here. I could not make out whether it was supposed to have a physical influence on the electricity, or to have a propitiatory effect, in a religious sense, calculated to exempt the district from a calamity. Opposite to Ternbach, on a spur of the mountain, right over the river inn, there is a sort of hermitage or chapel. It is the duty of a recluse who has charge of it to be on the look-out for thunderstorms, and begin the bell-ringing. He is well posted for the accomplishment of the duty. A solemn, strange duty it must be to act as sentinel against the approach of such a foe. I happened once to witness the ceremonial of ringing out the thunder in a very picturesque shape. I was coming out of the gorge behind the Martinswand. The first thing that drew attention was a rushing, mighty wind, which caught up the marble powder lying on the hillside, and drifted it about like a dry, sandy mist. Then came as sudden a lull, and the church bell of Zuri, right under my feet, began 'tolling slow, with sullen roar.' The chime was taken up by the dozen or so of other churches in the valley, mellowed in the distance, 'until it passed in music out of sight.' Meantime, the setting sun illuminated a great storm cloud, making it a flame, coloured red, that spread over half the horizon, as if the world were on fire; over

this passed, every now and then, a tongue or sheet of white lightning. The whole affair was so far off, that of the thunder only a slight muttering was heard. The church bells appeared to do their duty effectually, for the storm did not reach the district round Martinswand; but what of the efficiency of the bells in the place when it was actually at work?"

Bells were rung in the middle ages to drive away thunder. Among the German peasantry the sign of the cross is used to dispel a thunderstorm. The cross is used because it resembles Thor's hammer, and Thor is the thunder. For the same reason bells were often marked with the fylot, or Cross of Thor, especially where the Norse settled, as in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire. See "Legend of the Cross," by M. Baring Gould.

In Chateaubriand's "Spirit of Christianity" it is said that it was a marvellous discovery to have found in one stroke of an iron hammer the means of awakening the same feelings at the same moment in thousands of hearts, and to have enlisted the winds and clouds as bearers of the thoughts of men. Silence is not more poetical than the still air when animated by the sounding metal; it becomes alive, as it were, in the vastness of space. Looking upon the bell in the light of harmony only, it possesses an indubitable beauty of the first order—that which artists style grand. The noise of thunder is sublime, but only from its being grand; and thus it is with the winds, the ocean, volcanoes, cataracts, and a people's voice.

With what joy would Pythagoras, who listened to the hammer of the smith, have heard the sound of our bells upon the eve of a religious festival! Our soul may be exalted by the harmony of the lyre, but will not be stirred up as when the roar of cannon and a loud peal of bells proclaim the triumphs of the god of battles.

"Bells are peculiar to England," says Hazlitt. They jangle them in Italy, during the Carnival, as boys do with us at Shrovetide; but they have no notion of ringing them. The sound of village bells never cheers you in travelling, nor have you the lute or cithern in their stead. The expression of "merry bells" is a favourite, and not one of the least appropriate in our language—

"For him the merry bells had rung, I ween,
If in this nook of quiet bells had ever been."

Castle of Indolence.

Ah, yes, one might go on writing about bells for ever; and, even as I write, from the neighbouring tower they are pealing out—ding-dong, hammer, clang, clash!—as they did to Trotty Veck in "The Chimes;" but in spite of the sadness they infuse, there comes another memory, for I cannot help thinking that, as sure as a gun, those fellows who are ringing will be pulling another bell—that at my gate, and asking for a Christmas Box.

"CONSCIENCE!" said Mrs. Hopkins, indignantly, "do you suppose nobody has got any conscience but yourself? My conscience is as good as yours—aye, and better, too; for it has never been used in the whole course of my life, while yours must be nearly worn out."

A Wolf-Trap at Christmas.

PLENTY of frost there, and that's what I like.

None of your new-fangled, dreary, swampy, stodgy, foggy, smutty Christmases; but a clear, bright, sparkling time, with a heavy fall of snow drifting many feet deep in places; the great pines turned into snow pyramids, and their boughs bent to the ground. The thermometer down to zero, when the wind came cutting from the icy mountains. Lakes frozen over; birds so tame that you could catch them; and icicles two feet long hanging from the eaves of the quaint farmhouse.

Where was it? Why, in Northern Germany, where they believe in keeping Christmas as well as we do; and the frolics, feasts, burning logs, and cosy nights, with the wind roaring without, are something worth going hundreds of miles to enjoy.

You see, I was a student at Leipsic, and had allowed myself to be coaxed to go home and spend Christmas with a very dear friend, fellow-student, and companion.

I did not take much coaxing when Max began to talk of how we should spend our days.

"Plenty of sport for you, my boy. We may get a wild boar, perhaps a bear; but I'll guarantee that you shall shoot some wolves."

"Wolves," I said, "real wolves? Nonsense."

"Wolves—real wolves, and no nonsense," he retorted. "Why, my dear boy, they swarm about our place in winter. The keen weather drives them down out of the mountains into the forest, and from there they make raids on the farms, and will eat anything, from man down to a mouse."

"Now, look here, Max," I said; "out our way, at home, you may, if you look sharp, shoot a few sparrows, and a blackbird or two in the winter; and to hear a fellow talk about wolves is like going back to the reign of King Alfred the Great. Now, are you gammoning me?"

"Gammoning you? Why, of course not. My dear boy, we make regular parties to destroy the wolves, or we should not have a sheep or calf left. Now, will you come?"

"Well," I said, "I don't know. If I were sure—"

"What, of wolves?"

"No, no—of your folks being glad to see me."

"There, get out. Glad to see you, you old humbug! Why, they've been begging me to bring you. Lotte says she will never forgive you if you don't come. Retta says she shall cry her eyes out; and as for the old folks, they declare that if you will not come home with me, they shall be compelled to make a pilgrimage, to come here to Leipsic, and thank the man who saved my life."

"If that's going to be the sort of talk, Master Max," I exclaimed, "this child will give your paternal halls as wide a berth as he can."

"Then there shall not be a word said about it all. The past shall be buried as deeply as you like. I only told you this to show you how hearty a welcome awaits you; so say you'll come."

"I'll come," I said, laughing, delighted to go where so honest and hearty a welcome awaited me; and a few days later in December we left the muddy city for the wintry plains, loaded with presents for

the old folks, our guns and ammunition, skates—a couple of pairs of the prettiest and most modern-fashioned we could find being designed for the pretty feet of Lotte and Retta; for Max was proud of his sisters, and never weary of speaking in their praise.

It was bitter winter outside the city; but fur coats and wraps, with light young hearts, enabled us to withstand any number of degrees of frost, while I was either thinking of the pretty, fair-haired sisters, or else of the wolves we were to slay—very opposite subjects, but love and war necessarily hold high places in a young man's heart.

We had a journey of two days before us, the first night being spent in an out-of-the-way country town, whose surroundings quite prepared me for the wildness of the home of Max; and after seeing the extent of the pine forest and the depth of the snow, I was ready for anything.

Towards the afternoon we left the train at a little out-of-the-way station, where a great, old-fashioned four-wheel open carriage was in waiting for us, and prepared for a long, cold ride of fifteen miles through the snow.

"Why, Fritz, why didn't you bring the sleigh?" said Max, cheerily, after saluting the old servant, who grunted with pleasure at the sight of the young man.

"The master thought it would be too rough travelling for the gentleman, sir," said Fritz; "and, besides, there's all the luggage."

"So there is," cried Max—"pop it on, and let's be off."

The britzka was soon laden; and then for three mortal hours we were ploughing through the heavy snow, with Max driving and your humble servant doing his best to hold on, as we bumped about through the frozen snow which covered the rocky road.

At last, when I was about half-frozen, buried as I was in furs, and when we had been silent for quite half an hour, as we rode on in a cloud of steam through the coming darkness, Max suddenly pointed to the left with his whip and cried, "Here we are!"

Sure enough, there was a bright light shining over the snow, and at the end of another ten minutes we were standing before the icicle-laden porch of a low, long, quaint house, from whence emanated such a glow of light, warmth, and hospitality that the troubles of the journey were forgotten, and in five minutes I was quite at home.

I must pass over our jovial evenings, and the merry games and charades we acted. I must leave, too, the pleasant skating parties over the foot-thick ice of the lake. There was the sleighing too, with fair, blue-eyed Lotte or rosy Retta, with her silky long hair. But these can have no place here; for had I not come all the way to Kalzberg in the hope of having a little sport?

"Wolves—sport—wolves, oh, yes, my dear boy!" said the stoutly built head of the family. "I'll give orders to-morrow for news of the first rascal to be brought to us, and we'll trap him, so that you shall have his skin. Leave it to us."

"Trap? oh, no, pray don't," I said; "I would much rather shoot him."

"My dear fellow," said Max, laughing, "if we did not do something to trap the wolves first, you might follow the tracks through the snow for days without getting a shot. Leave it to us."

I did leave it to them; and I am ashamed to say that I had forgotten all about the wolves in the society of the sweet German doves, so that a week had passed away, when on Christmas Eve Max rushed into the room, where I was trying over a song at the piano with Lotte, to exclaim—

"Hurrah, my boy, the wolves came down last night to our neighbour's fold, and killed two sheep and half-killed another. Poor thing, it must die; so we are going to make his murderers die with him: they were scared off last night by the dogs."

"Oh, pray take care of yourself," cried Retta, growing pale.

"I will, if it will afford you any pleasure," I said, in a loud voice; and the sweet girl blushed, and crossed over to her sister.

"There, come along," cried Max; "we've lots to do before night."

I followed him, and soon found what our arrangements were to be. Three more joined us, with guns and plenty of ammunition; and with plenty of warm clothing, and some brandy, we made our way over the snow, and through about a mile of forest, to a rough kind of enclosure, where the farmer who had lost his sheep was in the habit of folding his lambs.

On the previous night they had been seized close to his house; but as the wolves had come near to this high fenced-in place, it was thought probable that they would be handy at night once more, and this would serve as a trap.

It was a cold and gloomy scene, but the excitement of what was to come warmed us all; for the prospect of soon being face to face with perhaps a pack of savage, blood-thirsty animals, crafty as they were cruel and fierce—beasts that would pull down a man when driven by hunger, and then—

There, the thought of what followed that "then" sent a shudder through me, though I set it down to the cold, and devoted myself to the charges of my double gun.

"Ah, you won't want that yet," said Max. "They haven't brought the bait."

"Brought the bait?" I said.

"Yes, the sheep. As I said before, the poor brute must die, so he may as well die in company with a few of the marauders."

He then took me round the little enclosure, which was formed by driving stout fir poles into the ground, and furnished with a good strong gate.

It was an out-of-the-way place for a fold; but Max explained that the trees by which it was surrounded sheltered it to some extent from the cold winds which came down from the mountains, and then fixed a strong cord to the open gateway, and pulled it two or three times, to see if the gate would close readily when the cord was pulled; and this proved to be the case.

"Well, I suppose you've some plan in your head," I said to Max; "but hang me if I can see it."

"Wait a bit, my friend. Oh, here they come!"

"What, the wolves?" I cried, cocking my piece.

"No, no—the sheep," he said, laughing at my im-

petuosity—"the mutton for the wolves' Christmas dinner. Dick, old fellow, you shall have such a wolfskin rug."

"Thank you," I said; "but first catch your hare—"

Further conversation was put a stop to by the arrival, through the wood, of a couple of peasants, bearing an unfortunate sheep, whose fleece was horribly torn and bloody; and as they carried it into the enclosure, with its muzzle bound up, I saw that some animal—of course, a wolf—had torn its throat in the most frightful way.

"Down with him in the middle," said Max, quickly; "and then untie its muzzle and go back."

"Mayn't we stay, sir?" said the men.

"Not unless you hide somewhere in the trees," said Max.

This the men readily did, where I didn't know till late on, for they were out of my sight.

"Now, take the cord and climb up into that tree," Max said to one of his men.

And the fellow rapidly shinned up a tree close to the entrance, and crouched in the fork, holding the cord tight and ready, so that, as the gate opened inwards, he had but to pull the cord sharply to drag the gate to.

Directly the poor sheep was unbound, it began to bleat dismally, and essayed to get up, but vainly, for it was too weak; and I felt in my heart that I should have liked to put it out of its misery; but on hinting such a thing to Max, he said—

"Here, come along; we'll put something out of its misery. Come and hide."

We crouched down, all of us with guns ready, at the back of the enclosure, and waited, with the weird light of the snow cast up on the ghostly tree trunks—waiting; forgetting the cold, as we rested on the snow, in the excitement; for we felt that it could not be long, if there were wolves in the forest, before they were attracted by the bleatings of the sheep.

An hour passed away, and the weird light grew more strange, before we had indubitable notice of the presence of wolves. The sheep had kept on an incessant bleating, but its cries were growing more feeble, when a soft "psth" from Max put all on the alert, and gazing through the crevice between two poles, I saw, right through the gateway, a long, lean, hungry-looking dog, as I thought; but, as he came trotting over the snow, I could make out that it was a red-eyed, gaunt-looking wolf.

He came on and on, stealthily; and then seemed to take the alarm, and cantered back, out of sight, amongst the trees.

"No go," I said.

"Oh, yes, all right," said Max. "It's only their way; he'll be back in a minute. Ready there?" he whispered to the man in the tree.

A low whistle was the reply; and then we waited minute after minute, my hopes sinking as I grew colder, and I was half disposed to shoot the poor sheep, whose cries were piteous to hear.

"It would put an end to it all," I said to myself, crossly, when I was galvanized into life by a sudden rush of feet, and several great gaunt wolves suddenly dashed into sight, ran right into the enclosure, and precipitated themselves upon the sheep, and began to rend the helpless creature.

One was, however, evidently alarmed by either some sound, or by scenting us, and looked round and peered about cautiously, when there was a sudden jerk of the cord, the gate swung to with a loud bang, and the wolves, scared from their banquet, showed what a cowardly race they belonged to by uttering a yell of dismay, galloping round the enclosure, and trying in vain to leap the fence.

Two made right for the gate, and tore at it in the most cunning way to get it open; but in vain, for already our guns were dealing out death; and in a very few minutes the little pack lay struggling or dead upon the trampled, blood-stained snow.

"Take care," said Max, as, after discharging our guns, we went into the enclosure. "Mind that one is not shamming dead, and does not spring at you."

The warning was well-timed; for one wounded beast—a huge, ferocious fellow—tried to set his teeth in my throat. The beast succeeded, in its sudden leap—for which I was not prepared—in fixing its teeth in my skin jacket; but, as I started back, the hold was torn away, and, recovering myself before help could come, the brute was knocked down by my gun-barrel; and the next moment I fired, and he lay dead by the sheep.

The bodies of the slain were skinned where they lay, and they formed baits for another party of four the next day; and, later on, we killed three more, so that the pack that infested the neighbourhood was considerably lessened.

As for the first party, whom we deprived of their Christmas dinner, their skins were made into a famous rug, which I took home, after a month's most pleasant stay, and during which time I believed that I was deeply in love with Retta, who flushed with delight on seeing me return safe from the hunt. But that love passage came to nought; Retta, after all, marrying a wealthy German burgo-master, while your humble servant is this Christmas, even as he was then—a bachelor.

Our Christmas Baby.

HER name was Pragg—Mrs. Pragg—and her address is Number 9, Rumsey's-buildings, Hoxton. I say that, so that I sha'n't forget, in case anybody else would like to have her, which, through choice, I shouldn't recommend.

You know me—at least, some of you must know my shop in the New North-road—Dubber, with a long spiral pole out, and "Try Dubber's Guinea Wigs" in gold letters in the window; though, as a matter of fact, I do more in "Easy shaving, one penny," than I do in wigs.

It was about me, you know, that the funny man wrote to the newspaper, and said he shouldn't try Dubber's guinea wigs. If Dubber wanted his wigs tried, he ought to try them on himself: which was unkind to a man who has early come to the grave smoothness of the bald. This was as unkind as the man who wanted me to try my own hair regenerator, just as if easy shaving at a penny meant more than just keeping going, and being ready for the landlord.

I'm a married man. I glory in it. I asked Jane

Simpson if she would, one day at the Rye House, and she would. So we saved up, and we arranged it so that she did incline to be my faithful Valentine; and it came off on the fourteenth of February.

I like being married; you've got some one to talk to when you've done shaving, and it distracts your attention from aggravation. For it's awful trying to go on shave, shave, shave, every day, after soaping 'em up. It's all very well up to about forty; after that, it gets on your nerves; and when you've the soap brush full in your hand, you have to bite your tongue hard, or else you'd get ramming the brush in people's eyes, or ears, or else asking 'em questions to get 'em to open their mouths, so that you may stuff the brush in, lather and all, and make 'em spit.

Many's the time, when I've tucked the cloth round people's necks, I've felt that on my nerves that I should have liked to strangle 'em; and then, say at forty-five or forty-seven, when you've got the razor well stropped in your fingers! People don't know what a barber thinks sometimes, or they wouldn't trust their heads in their hands.

That's why barbers talk so—to keep their thoughts off their work. It don't do to think about it—oh, no! Else some of 'em would be doing something, and no mistake.

It was Christmas Eve as Mrs. Pragg come, in a clean print dress and a basket, and took no notice of me at all; but went right through the shop to the wife, and then they did nothing but whisper by the hour together, making me that nervous that I snipped a boy's ear with the scissors as I was cutting his hair—charge tuppence—and couldn't stop the bleeding, do what I would.

There was the customers coming, and that boy's ear a-bleeding all over his pinafore, and him a hollering as if I was killing him. Sticking-plaster wouldn't keep on, because his ears was all twissen; cobweb was wet through directly; and the more old hat I put on, the more there was to come off, and get down inside the collar of his shirt; till I got that hot and wild, that I felt as if I ought to take his ear right off, so as to clap a plaster on the smooth place and stop the bleeding.

Then the customers bothered me, and wanted me to put cold keys down the boy's back. One told the boy as it 'ud do him good, and then if somebody didn't tell him as he'd bleed to death; when blest if he didn't cut off, half cut, and take my print cloth with him, and I never see neither him nor my cloth, nor my tuppens again.

Nex' day, as was the loneliest Christmas Day I ever spent, I got thinking of a twelvemonth before, when there was no Mrs. Pragg; and the nex' day after that this lady comes to the parlour door, while I was giving a gent change, and beckons to me solemn like, and I goes in, and there she stood, pynting to something rolled up in a bit o' blanket before the fire.

"What's that?" says I.

"Look!" says she. And I did.

"Well!" I says, feeling all queer like.

"A Christmas box for you," says she.

And I took another look at it; and there it was, a little pink one, with its little head shaved as clean as hand could make it.

There wasn't any peace arter that; for Mrs. Pragg seemed as if she belonged to everything. First thing she does, she comes and takes my shaving water.

"What now?" says I, a-wondering.

"To wash the baby," she says, in her solemn way; and I give in.

Then she comes and helps herself to a square of best scented; and ten minutes after she fetches a puff-box, and a packet o' wiolet powder. Then she came and sent me for gin—half a quartern, to rub the baby's head, and used it all—she must ha' done, for she said so; and I thought that was all; but lor' bless yer, not it. I s'pose the gin was too strong for the baby, seeing how it began to make faces, and squirm about; and Mrs. Pragg said that was the wind.

"Go and fetch another half a quartern of gin," she says.

And when I didn't seem to see it, she looked at me that fierce, I had to go; and just as she was going to give some to the little thing, a customer came in, and I had to go and shave him with cold water, and him a-grumbling all the while.

By and by, Mrs. Laver comes in, and then went out to fetch something. Soon after, Mrs. Ridley comes in, and she went out to fetch something. Then, in comes Mrs. Clack, and she went out to fetch something as made the place smell of sperrits.

They all went out to fetch something, but they didn't take the least bit o' notice o' me; for I was like no one in the house. And there they were, when I went into the back room, always going to the drawers, and getting things out, and putting 'em to the fire. Then they'd all have a go at turning them, and such a fire as they did keep up made me think about coals by the hunderd, and wonder how long Mrs. Pragg meant to stop.

Five o'clock came, and as I'd had no dinner, I wanted my tea; but there was none ready, so I began to get it myself, for Mrs. Pragg was sitting in the arm-chair, doing her naps; and when I spoke to her, she nearly snapped my head off.

So I had my bit of tea very uncomfortably, and was just finishing, after putting the pot on the hob, so as Mrs. Pragg could get a cup if she liked, when she wakes up with a snort, and begins to make a great fuss about mixing something in a black saucepan, which she said was for the baby.

"Why, the poor little chap can't eat that, can he?" I says.

"Which it's a *she*," says Mrs. Pragg, huffily; "and if you'll mind your business, sir, I'll see to mine."

So, seeing as there was a customer just come in to be shaved, I went to him, lathered him up, and was shaving him, when Mrs. Pragg nearly made me make an end of him by bouncing into the shop.

"None of your larks with me, young man," she says, "if *you* please."

"Larks!" I says—"what larks? What d'yer mean, frightening one like that?"

"None of your innercent looks with me," she says. "What have you done with the babbey?"

"Babbey?" I says, "I aint touched it."

"Which it's a story," she says, in a nasty sort o' way. "The little thing ain't there."

"Why, it's upstairs," I says.

And away she went; but only to come back, and make that customer's nose run such a risk that he got up, and said he'd finish hisself; and he forgot to pay.

"You've been a-larking with that babby," says Mrs. Pragg, "and you're no man."

Then she burst out a-crying, and said it was too bad.

"Here, come and let's look for it," I says.

"Oh, dear! oh, dear!" she says, after we'd looked upstairs and down, and not found it; "the angels must ha' took it back, poor dear."

And then she looked at me, and I looked at her.

"Come and have another look," I says.

And we did look, well; but it wasn't in the cradle; the cat didn't look fat, as if she'd eat it; it wasn't hung over the horse; nor it wasn't in the coalscuttle. All of a shiver, I then looks in the big chair; but Mrs. Pragg hadn't sat on it, and the baby was gone.

"One of them wicked women must ha' stole it," says Mrs. Pragg.

And I rushed off, and they all came back with me, declaring as Mrs. Pragg had it just before they left; and they all looked as stupid as Mrs. Pragg herself.

"I tell you what," I says, "if that baby aint found in less than five minutes, I goes for the police."

But I didn't. I only went into the shop, and stropped all my razors for two hours, and wondered what Mrs. Dubber would say; when all at once, one o' them women give a squeel, and I run into the back room.

"I know," she says.

And she ran to the drawers, and pulled one out, and there lay the baby, where Mrs. Pragg had laid it for a minute when they was airing things, and some one had pushed the drawer in, and they'd forgot it.

It wasn't pink then, and we thought it wouldn't come to; but it was a very soft baby, and we squeezed it back into shape in no time, when they put it in the cradle, to look just like what it was in its lace—a regular little Christmas Box.

P.S.—Mrs. Dubber is as well as can be expected.

Among the Icebergs.

CHAPTER XI.

SO much faith was placed in the old boatswain's remarks, that the following morning I was once more led down by Mr. Moore to the private room, where, after a great deal of shuffling, the whole crew of the *Ice Blink* were asked in, to stand, and stare, and nudge one another, till Mr. Moore spoke.

"Look here, my lads," he said. "You are plain men, and therefore I speak to you in plain words. Miss Wynne wishes to go north in our ship."

"But we won't sail, sir—we won't sail," cried half a dozen rough voices.

"Stop a little, men, and hear me out," cried Mr. Moore. "Miss Wynne, as I said before, wants to

go north in our ship; and Mr. Stephen Ellerby, who has no authority over you beyond being my partner's son, does not want her to go. So he tells you she is mad. Now, first of all, is it madness to want to go north?"

"Can't say as I see it is," said the young fellow who threw his cap about.

"Brayvo, Cheesey," cried Brunyee. "There's one man isn't a fool."

"Why, if it's madness to go north, you're all mad, aint you?" said Captain Pash.

"Now, look here, my lads," said Mr. Moore, leading me a step or two forward; "here's the young lady, and here is hermaid. Now, does either of them look mad; and do you mean to tell me that as men you will refuse to take them, and fight for them if need be? No, I'm sure you won't."

"Oh, no; I ask you in the name of all you love of all dear to you, not to be so cruel as to refuse," I cried, as, unable to bear it longer, I joined my hands, and appealed to first one and then another; for I was carried away by the excitement of the moment, and I went closer to them. "Pray, pray, take me! I am not mad—unless it is mad to love some one very dearly, who is lost up there amidst the cruel snow and ice. Take me with you—pray, pray, take me; and let us try to save those who are asking us to come to their help. I ask you, as brave Englishmen and sailors, not to turn a deaf ear to what—"

"There, Lord love and bless your beautiful bright diamonds of eyes, miss," cried old Brunyee, "you needn't say another word, for there aint a man here as aint ready to snivel. Why, they'll go, every one of 'em—round the whole world, if you come to that—for the sake of being talked to like that. I aint felt so soft for years; and as to saying they won't go, why, who is there as'll say it now?"

"Not you, Mr. Brunyee," I cried, catching at his hand, feeling so grateful that I kissed it.

"Look at that, men," said the rough old fellow, holding his hand out to them, "there, and with two bright diamonds of tears upon it. D'yer see that? Why, if I thought there was a man here as would turn tail now, I'd be one o' the first to help pitch him overboard—I mean outer winder—only there aint such a man. Ask 'em all round, miss, if they'll go, and see what they say. You'll all go, won't you?"

"Yes!" they shouted.

And the young, sheepish fellow they called Cheesey stepped forward to speak, said a word or two, picked his cap, spoke again, and then fairly shuffled back to the last of the group, amidst a roar of laughter, which pained me, for I knew the young man meant well, and that he would be a trusty friend.

"I thought they'd come round," said Mr. Solly.

"Well, you see, sir," said the grisly old fellow they called Burke, and who was supposed to be deaf, "we thought as how the lady was neither one thing nor t'other, and would be all tantrums, and want putting in irons, besides the ill luck of the thing; but as, arter all, she aint mad—why, we're all ready, aint us, boys, eh?"

"Ay, ay," they all cried.

"Then I tell you what, my lads; let's all go on board at once," said Mr. Moore.

"But liberty time, sir," growled one.

"My lads, time's valuable," said Mr. Moore; "and to show you that we're willing to make up for any little unpleasantness, there's a pound a man extra for you, and extra grog on board. Captain Pash and Mr. Solly, will you see to the rest?"

The men, one and all, touched their foreheads, and directly after they left, regularly in custody; for they were all got on board within an hour, and ample means taken to prevent Stephen Ellerby obtaining a fresh hold upon their weakness.

I learned after, that he had tried again and again to get on board, but old Brunyee was too watchful; when, finding that his efforts to prevent my sailing could not achieve success in that direction, he tried another plan.

I begged and entreated Mr. Moore so, that he promised to hold to me in all things, and to help me out in my great difficulty; for I foresaw that I must have another interview with my father and mother.

It was as I thought. The next day Mr. Moore fetched me to see them, when, to my utter surprise, I found them apparently resigned to my plans; they even talked of them cheerfully, and told me they hoped that I should soon be safely back.

Both Mr. Moore and I thought that this meant some scheme, and I was consequently upon my guard; but I learned soon after what it meant, for the mystery was cleared up.

Then came parting and sorrow, and I clung to Mr. Moore, shedding the first tears that had escaped my eyes for days, when he held me tightly to his breast.

"God bless you, my child!" he cried, in a choking voice. "I have done all as you wished; but now it is done, I feel as if I had acted wrongfully, and I wish it all were undone again, for this going is indeed an act of madness."

He saw us safely on board, and accompanied us some three or four miles, as we slowly dropped down the river, with the low Yorkshire and Lincolnshire coasts on either side; and then, as he went down to his boat, and they pushed off, a great feeling of blank sorrow came upon me; for we were off upon a voyage from which we might never return—three women bound to those terrible regions where the night of winter is months in length—and I accused myself of a horrible selfishness in leaving my father and mother, although Mr. Moore had promised that with them all should go well.

I stood watching the shore for hours, with Ann by my side. Mrs. Pash, the captain's wife, had twice been to ask me to go below, and I had refused; but now darkness was beginning to fall, the land looked dim and distant, and, with a sigh, I listened to Ann's suggestion that we should now seek the cabin, when I uttered a sharp cry, wrung from me by the surprise of the moment; for there stood he whom I had for the last few hours utterly ignored—there stood the man who had already occupied so large a share of my thoughts. I had left England, but I was not to be free of his presence; for there, destined evidently to be one who would

share the voyage till we returned to port, was the man who seemed to have been the bane of my existence—Stephen Ellerby.

CHAPTER XII.

I PASS over the early part of my voyage, merely pausing to remark that Stephen Ellerby's presence was a planned thing between him and my father. To judge from his behaviour to me, nothing could have been more unlikely to a stranger than that he had ever sought me for his wife, for he was calm, quiet, and resigned. His kindness to me was not even marked by the slightest tinge of *empressment*, but just such as I might have expected from a pleasant fellow-passenger, though my heart the while whispered "beware!"

The voyage was pleasant upon the bright northern seas. The time was early summer, and the treatment I encountered from all on board was such as might have been rendered to a queen. Mrs. Pash was a good motherly soul, even though childless; and if I would but listen to her while she sounded the praises of the captain, or at times speak a few words in his favour, she was ready to idolize me. Mr. Solly, too, was most kind in his rough, north-country fashion; while as for old Brunyee, he was like some rough old watch-dog, always at my heels, constituting himself my body-guard, and sitting by me on the deck, to repeat his old stories of northern expeditions, and ships being frozen in, winning upon me by his complete faith in our prospect of finding the lost, which he never for a moment seemed to doubt.

But if I had my train of courtiers, so had Ann, who used to complain in a serio-comic way how attentive some of the men were, notably Cheesey, the young sailor—a tall fellow, who Ann declared was too tall to be measured in feet, for he was above two yards.

The weather had been so calm that I had, as Brunyee said, got my sea legs beautifully; and as we sailed on, and into higher latitudes, I began to wonder what course Captain Pash would take, and how we should search on land.

"Don't you trouble about that there, miss," said Brunyee, one day, when I expressed my doubts; "and mind this here. You may say any manner of thing you like to me, for I'm an old sea salt, as hard and tough as a bit of iron. Why, God bless your little heart, I often feel ready to take you up in my arms, and kiss you, like I would my Polly, as is my gran'child, you know—sixteen she is. But as I was saying, just you look to me whenever we're in a bit o' trouble, in the cold times to come—I'll stan' by you, miss, 'till I'm froze into chips, that I will. If you want old Sam Brunyee, there he is, night or day; so if you are at any time in a fix, Sam's the name you've got to call out, so just mind that."

If at any time there was anything to see, it was Sam that was the first to summon me—not that I could take much interest in anything, till one day I heard his familiar call, and went on deck to look for the first time on ice.

Of course, I had seen the ice of our own winters, and bergs in miniature of dirty river ice, floating from the Ouse and Trent along the murky Humber;

but here was ice from the far north, where those we sought were chained; and I gazed with awe upon the mighty island mass of pinnacle and turret, rent, cleft, and ravine, from which trickled down innumerable silver rills to the sea. Floating majestically on, it was to me a scene of splendour, beneath that clear blue sky, itself blue from the palest to the deepest sapphire, save where the sun fell upon the glittering points, which were here golden and dazling, there various in the sheen of the wondrous tints.

"Werry pretty, now, aint it?" said a rough voice at my side; "but that's a reg'lar cuss, that is. It's a humbug, miss, like some han'some men: all very well in the sunshine, but come foul weather, where are you? Not to be trusted a bit. That there shiny glittering thing's a mass of foam in a rough sea, and it's what your foam hangs round; and if a poor ship runs on to it, where are you, eh? I'll tell you. Down at the bottom afore you know it. There now, what an old gummock I am! Don't you go thinking that now. Don't you go and fancy as Capen Mark Grant went and run on to one of them in a fog. Not he. He's too good a sailor. He's froze up, that's where he is, safe."

I learnt, by degrees, what were Captain Pash's instructions from Mr. Moore; and, to my great delight, I found that the whaling was to be set aside for that voyage.

"For, you see, Miss Wynne," said the captain, "Mr. Moore said to me, 'Pash, I've set my heart on having the *Dawn* found, and those who are with her. So go on at once, sail right up to the most likely places, and never mind the fish; for what you lose, I'll make up to you and the men too. Whatever I've thought or said before, I set aside now, rescue or no rescue. Make yourselves into a party of search, and bring them back.'"

The weak tears again filled my eyes, as I heard how thoroughly the good old man had adopted my cause; and again I mentally prayed for the success of our voyage.

From seeing a berg now and a berg then, they grew to be frequent, and we were soon navigating a sea where care was doubly necessary, lest we should be wrecked on one of these floating islands. Now the monotony of the voyage was varied by touching at some cheerless settlement, where mountain, rock, and glacier gave a sombre grandeur to the scene; and then we were once more sailing on and on, past berg, and floe, and pack, with seal, and walrus, and sea birds innumerable, till we were far up in the ice king's realms, in the region of eternal frost and snow, where snow bird and ptarmigan, with the eider and the artic gull, had their home; where blue fox, reindeer, and the mighty bear roamed the frozen fields; and, highest yet, but low indeed, the Esquimaux hunted from his dog-drawn sledge.

Is there any English word that contains all the vowels?—*Unquestionably.*

A DEBATING society in Michigan had for its last question, "When a young lady refuses an offer of marriage, can she justly be accused of sleight of hand?"

The Egotist's Note-book.

IT pays to visit the Czar and Empress of Russia. Prince Humbert and his wife have just left St. Petersburg with two magnificent presents—a ring set with rubies and a pair of splendid horses. One is very busy just now, but Mr. and Mrs. Czar may expect a visit as soon as our rush of work is over.

A reporter says, "A man was run over at the station yesterday by a coal train while drunk." This sad accident should impel temperance men to ask, "Whither are we drifting?" When a coal train gets drunk, it is high time the brakes were put on the liquor traffic. If a coal train can't indulge in "bumpers" without becoming inebriated and running over a man, it should be "switched off"—and often.

The following conversation took place in a foreign-looking wine vaults:—

"Landlord, what's the name of this wine?"

"Der name? Oh! it's—but for vy you wants to know de name, ha?"

"Oh, you've baptized it with water, and so I supposed it must have a name."

Mr. Rooper prefers, he tells us, Irish keepers to Scotch, considering the latter too cautious in their utterances—a fault which, from the following conversation, can hardly be alleged against the natives of the Emerald Isle:—

"Shure, a finer day never shone out of heaven than that we'll have, please God! Salmon! faith, there's hardly room for the fish to swim in the river itself."

"Are there grouse in the mountain?"

"Bedad, the mountain's just crowded with them."

"Snipe?"

"Wheugh!"

An interjection indicative of innumerable wisps, and of slightly contemptuous surprise at your asking such a question.

"Have you any thermometers or triangles in the bog?"

Pat pauses a second, and then replies, boldly and decidedly—

"Shure, there are that same!"

Now that winter has come, and ladies are looking forward to many a pleasant evening spent in the enjoyment of the dance, they often forget the attendant fatigue, until the exhaustion of the following day reminds them that every pleasure has its alloy. This fatigue is in great measure produced by the tight ligature or garter with which the stockings are fastened, hindering the free circulation of the blood. Medical men are unanimous in declaring the use of garters to be a most fruitful source of disease. Every lady desiring health and comfort should at once provide herself with a pair of the new patent stocking suspenders, made by Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London. The price is only 3s. per pair, of any draper, or post free for two extra stamps.

Three Hundred Virgins.

A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS.

CHAPTER XVII.—A FAILURE.

THE next morning the men had the satisfaction of finding that they were to be treated just as if they were prisoners. A supply of food was sent to them, and left on the shore, without a word. Afterwards, by degrees, the whole of the contents of their cabin were sent ashore, with another spare sail, a spar, and some rope, with plenty of ammunition.

This was all done by four of the women, led by the girl named Lee; and they did it all in silence, refusing to answer when spoken to, and returning hastily when their task was done.

A few hours after, a party came ashore, under the leadership of Deborah, when an attempt was made to get an explanation; but the men were kept at a distance, and after a while the party returned on board.

"Well," said Helston, quietly, as they sat in their improvised tent, "they seem as if they can get on without us, so I suppose we had better show them that we can get on without them."

"If I could only feel at rest as to their treatment of those two poor girls," said Laurent, "I should not mind. But how long is this to last?"

"Till we take the upper hand," said Helston.

"But will you—shall we do it?"

"I feel very much disposed," replied Helston.

"With Deborah Burrows made a prisoner, the others would be tractable enough."

"I don't know about that," said Laurent; "but, at all events, we might get a new queen, whose behaviour towards us would be a little more bearable."

Time went on, and as the small working parties came ashore it was evident that they were carefully watched with a glass by Deborah, the consequence being that not a word could be obtained with any one, though it seemed evident that, under different circumstances, the visitors to the shore would have been more lenient.

After a day or two, orders came from the vessel, signed by Deborah, to the effect that the men were to shoot pigs, catch fish, and work at the gardening, if they expected to receive supplies from the ship. So, in a sullen, dissatisfied way, they set to, and a system of barter was kept up.

"Shall we try to send a couple of notes on board?" said Laurent. "It would be as well to have friends there."

"And do you think you can find a messenger?" said Helston. "No: depend upon it you would fail. If you begin to pay attentions to either of these women who come ashore, I dare say she will listen to you; but she will not help you to woo one on board, you may depend upon that. 'Thello,' he said, turning to the cook.

"Sah, I am listen to what you say," said the black with dignity.

"Go down to the beach as soon as it is dark, and roll four of the water casks round to the back of the point."

"Dere no water, sah, behind de point."

"No," said Helston, "I know; but there is a convenient place for constructing a fresh raft out of sight of the ship, and I dare say we can scrape together enough materials."

"Golly, sah, you make noder raff, and go aboard," cried 'Thello. "I-yah!—i-yah! Ma'am Deborah be mad as bob-tail bull."

"Of course you will be silent about it—not a hint to the women who come ashore."

"Sah, dis chile gib you him word of honour," said 'Thello; and soon after he left to perform his mission, for there were a dozen or two of water casks on the beach, which had been floated out of the vessel.

It was now dark, and the two young men sat looking across the smooth water, flashing with lights from the ship, and thinking of their strange position. It was a hot, sultry night, with the stars looking dim and misty. Now and then a merry laugh reached them from the ship; and, as if to warn them of the dangers by which it was surrounded, a heavy splash and a phosphorescent gleam showed where some huge fish dashed over the shallows.

"Shark, I should think," said Laurent, quietly. "If you mean getting on board, we have only to wait long enough, and we might walk, for the water gets shallower every day."

"Yes," said Helston, "more so than I can understand; for there seems to be no tide strong enough to wash the sand round the vessel, and the lagoon is certainly silting up."

"Well, and when we have made our raft, what do you mean to do?" said Laurent. "Never mind the sand."

"Get on board, and put an end to this degrading state of affairs."

"Use force?"

"No more than is necessary," said Helston. "We have only to master that woman, and we are safe."

"I believe you are right," said Laurent. "It is time an alteration was made."

There was a pause, during which they heard the rumbling of the casks over the sand as 'Thello busied himself over his task.

"Helston," said Laurent, at last.

"Yes."

"Do you think those girls care for us?"

"I think we are going the way to make them despise us for a pair of curs," said Helston, sharply. "I gave away over this nonsense at first—treating it with contempt."

"And now madam has gone too far, you mean business?"

"I do," said Helston.

In the morning they watched their opportunity, cut down a few cocoa poles, and by means of driving stout pegs into the bungholes of the casks, formed uprights to which they could lash the poles, fitting cross-pieces, and by contriving, forming a tolerably secure raft, which at last lay unobserved behind the point upon the sands, ready for launching as soon as it was dark.

They saw very little of the women that day. They made one or two expeditions ashore, and then returned—the raft being carefully guarded—and, at last, down went the sun, like a great orange globe,

in the purple sea, and the men prepared for their expedition.

At Helston's wish it was deferred till the lights were out, and then all they would have to do would be to put off, climb softly on board by the stay beneath the bowsprit, secure the hatches at the companion, the fore-castle, and the cabins—for the women had now pretty well distributed themselves over the vessel—and wait for morning.

Fortunately for them, the night was very dark; and when they went noiselessly over the sands towards the point, which lay about a quarter of a mile along the shore, the only sound to be heard was the lapping of the waves against the sand.

"What's that?" said Laurent, suddenly, as a sharp gleam of light rendered them visible for a moment.

"Dat lightning, sah," said 'Thello. "I see um twice to-night ober de top ob de mountain."

They looked in that direction, and saw that the black was right; for twice over, during the next few minutes, they saw quivering gleams of light play about the top of the mountain; and then they went on.

The launching was no easy matter, for the raft, like the sand, was heavy; but once they got the first cask in, the rest of the task came light, and soon after they were poling their vessel softly through the waters of the lagoon on their way towards the ship.

It had now grown so dark that it was with the greatest difficulty they could find their way. Once they felt sure they had passed the ship; and after going forward for some time, they determined to push back, when Helston's hand came in contact with the cable, and the rest of their task was easy; for with the rope to guide them they soon reached the side, carefully worked the raft along, and had just reached the ropes beneath the bowsprit, when a low whistle was heard, and in a moment lanterns appeared upon the deck, a blue light shed its pale glare upon the scene, and Helston and his companions found that their chance of success was gone, unless they chose to fight their way on board.

"Put back," said Laurent, savagely.

And seizing the pole, he thrust the raft away, and forced it along into the darkness beyond the glare shed by the blue light, which, after a few moments, burned down, amidst the derisive laughter of the women on board.

"This is worse than ever," said Helston, angrily. "How could they have known? 'Thello, you must have betrayed us."

"'Tray you, sah? Dis chile scorn de action."

"Then how could they have known?"

"They must have seen the raft," said Laurent.

"Impossible," said Helston. "'Thello, I saw you talking to Smith to-day. Did you give her a hint of what we were about to do?"

"Well, sah, to tell the troofe," said 'Thello, "I did gib her juss a hint, 'cos she berry fond ob dis chile; but I tole under promise ob secresy."

Helston said nothing, only blamed himself for not keeping the matter to themselves; and they poled ashore, having the satisfaction of seeing lanterns displayed on the vessel for the remainder of the night.

CHAPTER XVIII.—BETTER SUCCESS.

ON the following day, Deborah, who felt that she saw through the affair, which she concluded to be an attempt to rescue Grace Monroe and Mary Dance, called the two girls to her, and, before the whole of the women, launched out into a tirade upon their indelicate behaviour, declaring that they must have been communicating with the shore, and rousing Grace so that there was an angry piece of recrimination, ending in the poor girl being locked up with Mary in one of the cabins, and kept close prisoner.

"I believe," said Mary Dance, who was flushed with passion, "that if that wicked wretch, Laurent, were to come now, and ask me to run away with him, I should do it; and if the doctor came, you'd be foolish if you didn't do the same."

"Whatever happens," said Grace, quietly, "don't let's lose our self-respect."

"I don't believe they were coming to see us," said Mary, after a pause; "it was some plan they had in their heads. Oh, if I were a man, would I put up with such behaviour?"

"Pray say no more," said Grace.

"If I was Mr. Helston, I'd poison that woman, that I would," said Mary, shedding tears of rage. "Oh, when is this to end?"

Perhaps sooner than Mary Dance expected.

In the course of the day, advantage was taken of the men's absence from the shore to destroy their raft; and they had the satisfaction of seeing the casks all secured on deck when they came back that evening; so that, if they intended to get on board, another plan must be formed.

This emanated from the brain of Laurent, and was immediately put in force. The wood at the back of their tent was never visited by the women, who kept quite away; and here the men quietly set to work, Deborah Burrows being quite ignorant of the fact that she had furnished them with the means of boarding the vessel in the large tarpaulin sent ashore as a protection from the damp.

Canes were in abundance of all sizes; and out of these a canoe framework was soon lashed together, over which the tarpaulin was stretched, sewn together, and tarred over where it needed it, forming, when finished, a very clumsy but thoroughly trustworthy canoe, buoyant enough to have carried half a dozen instead of three.

This time 'Thello had promised faithfully that he would keep his own counsel, and so as to avoid all risk of betrayal, one or the other remained with him day after day.

At last the trial was to be made, and waiting this time till what they judged to be an hour before sunrise, the canoe was pushed off, and easily poled in the direction of the great black vessel, lying sluggishly there with its keel deep in the sand.

It was nearer daylight than the adventurers thought—so near, indeed, that Mary Dance had awoken, and gone to the cabin window to open it, and let in the pure morning air to the close and stifling cabin.

She had hardly thrown open the window, and looked out, than she uttered an exclamation, which

awoke Grace, who looked up in astonishment to see her drawn back, but gazing horror-stricken and wondering from the window.

She was by her side in a moment.

"What is it?" she exclaimed. "Savages?"

"Yes," said Mary, pointing, "savages;" and a strange smile played on her lip, as Grace could just see through the dim light the three figures in the canoe.

"What are you going to do?" said Mary, as Grace started towards the door.

"Alarm Deborah—the ship," said Grace.

"Why?" said Mary, quietly.

"Because those men must be coming with some evil design," said Grace, agitatedly, "and it is our duty."

"I don't think it is," said Mary, putting her arms round her, "and I think their evil design is to get possession of the ship."

"Then let's give the alarm," said Grace.

"No, dear, don't," said Mary, whose face was like fire; "I begin to think that it would be better to be ruled by men than such as these on board. And you, don't you think they have been punished enough?"

Grace stood silent, her cheeks flushed, and her hands trembling.

"Shall I speak to them?" said Mary.

"No, for Heaven's sake, no," cried Grace. "Let them do what they will, but by no help of ours."

She threw her arms round Mary, and they stood listening to the soft splash-plash of the pole with which the canoe was propelled. Then there was silence for some time, and they began to think that the adventurers had gone, when a sharp click at the door of the next cabin, plainly heard through the bulkhead, roused Deborah Burrows, who started up in her cot.

"What's that?" they heard her exclaim.

A moment after they heard her hurriedly dressing, and they silently followed her example.

Soon they heard her try her door, to find it fast on the other side, when she appeared to be listening.

Then came a knock at the bulkhead, and Mary signalled Grace to answer.

"Is your door unfastened?" said Deborah.

"How can it be," said Mary, sharply, "when you locked it, and keep the key?"

There was no further conversation, the occupants of both cabins listening attentively for what was to come; while Helston and his companions, having securely placed their enemies in prison by the simple proceeding of fastening door and hatch, stood on deck debating where it was likely Deborah Burrows would be sleeping.

A YOUNG gentleman, having made some progress in acquiring a knowledge of Italian, addressed a few words to an organ grinder in his purest accent, but was astonished at receiving the following response, "I no speak Inglis."

A GENTLEMAN, on being requested by a rich and vulgar young fellow for permission to marry "one of his girls," gave this rather crushing reply—"Certainly; which would you prefer, the housemaid or the cook?"

An Adventure with a Lion.

IT has been my good fortune to hunt the lion upon two occasions, and the first time I came back empty-handed.

I was encamped while a young officer of the French army in Northern Africa with the tribe of the Beni Menasseur, and one night the Caïd of the tribe, and some Kabyles of the neighbourhood, came to smoke the pipe of peace with me round the fire of my bivouac, and to chat about the every-day affairs of the district. One announced that fruit would be plentiful, another had a long tale to tell of the mischief that the jackals had done in the flocks of goats.

"But on the whole," said the Caïd, solemnly, "we have much to be thankful for."

"Indeed," I said. For he evidently wanted to be questioned.

"Yes," he said; "the Lord of the Big Head has gone away from among our mountains."

"The Lord of the Big Head!" I said. "Who is he?"

"The great lion," said the Caïd. "He used to be here; but he has gone most likely, being a solitary bachelor, to take a wife down in the valley of Zatima."

"So much the worse for us," exclaimed an old man; "and Allah preserve us from the pair."

"Why?" said I.

"Don't you understand the caprice of women?" said the old fellow. "You are young and strong, your beard is black, eye clear, and your heart generous. You go your way through life full of goodwill to all, and free from hatred or bitterness. You marry—your vigour departs, your body grows weak, your head grey, your eye loses its brightness, and your heart dwells upon nothing but love. You see nothing in life but what is necessary to gratify your wife, jealousy makes you hate men, and interest makes you vile and contemptible."

"Oh, woman—woman!" sighed the Caïd.

"It is so with the lion," said the old man. "When he grows up his father says to him: 'My son, leave me my cave, and follow your destiny. If you remain a bachelor you will be a noble, generous beast, and will eat only the well-fatted flocks of the rich; if, on the contrary, you take a wife, she will make you to eat the slandered ass of the poor—a poor, wretched pittance.'"

"Well?" I said.

"Don't you understand?"

"Not I—by Jove."

"Why, if the lion remains unmarried, he goes to and fro ferociously in the land; he picks out the fattest bullock in the chief's troupe; if he returns with a wife he will scour the country, and, in his devotion to his wife, will seize the cattle of everybody to satisfy the caprices of his lean, lank-sided madam."

The moon was going down, and the mountain at whose foot I was encamped stood out boldly marked against the scintillating, starlit heavens.

All at once there was a terrible echoing roar heard at a short distance—a wild, startling sound, that made the poor horses, picketed as they were, shiver and rattle their halter-chains, while the dogs lowered their muzzles and crept close together.

"Allah preserve us!" ejaculated the Caïd.

"It's he!" exclaimed several.

"He speaks loudly to-night."

Then there was silence, and every one listened attentively.

It was spring-time, and spring-time in the more temperate regions of Africa. The night was soft and mild, and we had let our bivouac fire go nearly out. With a quick, imperious gesture, the Caïd gave orders that the fire should be replenished.

"The flame frightens the great beasts," he said, in a low voice.

"Fire is a gift from heaven," said the old man, solemnly. "It protects man from the cold, from hunger, and from his enemies. Heaven gave it only to man. The most insignificant animal, if it knew how to illumine fire, would burn up the world."

"What is the lion doing?" inquired the Caïd, softly.

"Perhaps he will let us know," said the old man. "If he roars three times, it means that the place suits him, and that he has found a cavern to his taste."

At that moment a roar more terrible than the first came rolling out of the ravine, whose sides echoed and re-echoed with the awful cry, while, when it ceased, the air seemed to vibrate with the formidable howl.

"He has taken a wife; he is married," whispered the Caïd.

"It will be a terrible pair," said the old man; "for the lion is old, and his wife young."

"How do you know that?" I asked.

"When the lion modulates his roar with the sound of 'e,' he is hardly full grown; when he gives his cry the sound of 'ou,' he is a lion fit for hard fighting."

"And the female?"

"When young, she yelps or cries; when married, she howls like a great cat; when she is a mother, she is perfectly silent for fear any one should detect that she has a litter of tender cubs."

Suddenly there came rolling out on the night breeze the third roar—one which was even more terrible and sustained than those uttered before. The horses snuffed and trembled, the dogs howled and shivered; while the Kabyles sat calmly impassive as if there was no danger near.

As for me, I was only twenty then, and my heart beat violently—not from fear, for I was in perfect security; but I felt a strange emotion, so overpoweringly terrible was the great voice close at hand.

"He has found a lodging," said the old man, with bated breath. "Allah protect our flocks and herds!"

"We must go and beg him to go," said the Caïd.

"But he is married, and will not," said the old man, quietly.

"How should you tell him to be off?" I said, smiling. "How would you give him his *congé*?"

"We should wait till the dawn," said the old man, "and then track him by his footprints to his den. When we got there we should stop short. It is necessary to have a stout heart, and to say to him, in a manly tone—'Lion, are you there?' If he is present, and willing to give his visitors an audience,

he will growl. Then we say to him—'My lord, you frighten our women. This evening our flocks and herds will be gathered together in the valley—come and dine with us, and then take the road to another country. The world is wide—I pray you do not trouble us.' If he accepts the rendezvous, he responds with a low growl; and if so, all is well, for a lion never breaks his word."

As I smiled, and seemed to give very little credence to this narrative, the old man grew vexed at my doubts, and jumped up.

"My lord," he exclaimed with dignity, "it would be shameful for a man with a white beard to lie to one who has a beard that is black. Ask the people of my tribe if this is true. For the last fifty years I have been the ambassador of my people. Ask them, and they will tell you whether I know how to speak to a lion."

The Kabyles, one and all, declared that he had spoken nothing but the truth, and Mussulman etiquette prescribed that I should at once make my apologies to the susceptible old gentleman for having doubted his word.

"Well," said the Caïd, "what do you say to hunting the great beast?"

"I am willing," I cried, "and quite at your service."

"Good!" exclaimed the Caïd. "Then, my children," he continued, turning to his people, "tomorrow morning let us meet, all well armed, and we will do the *haihaia*."

There was a murmur of satisfaction at the proposition, and the party separated.

I went my rounds; and in remembrance of the terrible howls, I had the picket ropes of the horses doubled; and after having posted my sentries, I retired to my tent, where I soon fell asleep, and slept as young men of twenty can sleep, and began dreaming of the exploits of Hercules.

The word *haihaia* is one which may be very well translated into English by hunting by halloos, for it is by means of shouting that it is done.

The next morning all the able-bodied men were gathered round my tent, armed to the teeth. Some had guns, some pistols, some only spears or lances, while the poorest carried clubs, a kind of mallet made of oak-wood, carefully hardened in the fire.

I distributed cartridges to those who professed to be short of ammunition, and soon after, at a signal given by the Caïd, we started off on our expedition.

At break of day the old Kabyle, accompanied by several companions, had proceeded to track the beast by his footprints. The traces left by the male were large and deep, and the imprint of his talons showed plainly in the soft earth, moistened as it was by the dew. The tracks of the female, on the contrary, were of a more vagrant nature—lighter and doubtful, disappearing again and again amongst the bushes.

We followed, then, the track of the lion, which led us at last into a ravine, which wore the aspect of a suitable home for a beast of prey.

"Forward, my children," exclaimed the Caïd, as his people halted for a few moments. "We shall be face to face with the Lord of the Big Head directly."

The Kabyles spread themselves out, and surrounded the clump of bushes which seemed likely to have been selected by the lion as a resting-place, while the stronger party of the chasseurs, who were with me, chose a favourable spot for firing, picking their position according to the well-known fact that when a lion is attacked he never descends, but always climbs higher. As for the Kabyles, they were divided into two bands, those who were to fire at the lion, and those who were to fire at the lioness.

According to the people of the district, the lion, when attacked, dashes boldly out of his retreat, measures the danger before him, and never gives battle if the party are strong. If there is open ground before him he does not hesitate to beat a retreat, and to go off as fast as his legs will carry him.

The lioness, on the contrary, as soon as she is disturbed, bounds furiously out, and blindly attacks those who have molested her. The Arabs, consequently, fear her more than they do the lion.

The party stood steady for our friend of the big head, intending, as they waited with their pieces cocked, to choose the moment when the beast stopped after his first bound out of cover, to give him a sharp fusillade. Those who were to fire upon the lioness placed themselves ten paces, before the others, going down upon their knees, so as to offer less surface for attack, and also so as not to interfere with the fire of the second rank.

"Now," exclaimed the Caïd, when he had made his dispositions—"are you all ready, my children?"

The click-click of the locks of the pieces was the response.

And then commenced the *haïhaïa*.

Ear never before listened to so horribly vile a concert. Each Kabyle uttered a wild shout, and every one apostrophised the lion according to his own ideas.

"Ah, abominable wretch!" cried one.

"He's afraid!" said another.

"He daren't come out."

"The sneak!"

"The cowardly brute!"

"It isn't a lion: it's only an ox."

"Come out, and bring your ugly wife."

"Get out, miserable night-crawler."

"Thief."

"Footpad."

"Coward! You're afraid of us."

"Where's your heart, you great poltroon?"

"Dog in a lion's skin, show thyself!"

Imagine all these epithets discharged, at one and the same time, at the head of the offending beast, and in a variety of keys, as they were howled and shouted with all our followers' force. The noise was enough to make me stop my ears, only that I wanted my hands for my gun.

The bushes, however, did not move, and there seemed to be no sign of the lion. Meanwhile, the Kabyles, exciting one another by their cries, approached the narrowest part of the ravine, and two or three of them went close up to a hole in the rocks that might be the monster's den, going right in and discharging their pieces at random.

It was now about eleven o'clock, and the sun came down with full violence upon our heads, the heat at

the bottom of the ravine being absolutely suffocating, from the absence of a breath of air, and the reflection of the sun from the arid rocks. First one hunter, and then another, complained of his sufferings, and one and all seemed ready to drop.

As for me, I suffered as much as any one, but I maintained my place between the Caïd and the old grey-bearded Kabyle.

"The lion has been driven out," I said to this latter.

"No," he said, quietly, "he is an old rascal, as cunning as a jackal. As soon as he heard us coming he crouched down amongst the bushes. Depend upon it he is now close to us, and ready to show fight. You see the lion has always held man in the most profound contempt since the days of Adam."

"Indeed?" I said.

"He does not like liars," said the old man, "and Adam told a lie to screen himself."

"Very true," I said.

"So," continued the old man, "since that day the lion has stood at the head of the wild beasts who despise mankind, and hardly troubles himself to come out."

"Indeed," I said. "And how about the lioness? What has become of her?"

"The lioness? Oh, she has grown tired of watching by her sleeping lord. She has gone out for a stroll, and won't join him again till night."

All this while the tremendous shouting went on all round us, and how a respectable lion could bear being disturbed and insulted with such names as he was called is more than I can tell. At last the Kabyles went right through the bushes, beating them on all sides without result; and every one now began to despair of seeing any lion.

All at once a terrible roar rose just above us; and starting and looking up, there, to our surprise, stood the lion, standing upon a rock, full in view against the clear sky, and looking the very essence of power and majesty in wrath, as he stood grinning savagely, lashing his tufted tail, and roared again and again, while his mane rose up bristling, horrent, and huge.

This only lasted for a few moments, and then the Lord of the Big Head looked down upon us very peaceably—for the noise had stopped—and seemed to ask us what the dickens we meant by kicking up such a disturbance in his domains.

The voice of the lion silenced all others, and from the moment of his appearance all present watched him with bated breath. The next moment, though, every piece was laid to its owner's cheek, careful aim was taken, and a scattered volley was fired.

The miserable guns of the Arabs sent the balls here, there, and everywhere but into the tawny hide of the lion. For the most part, the lead went pattering amongst the bushes which garnished the foot of the rocks.

As for the lion, he did not budge an inch—only looked rather ugly, made his mane bristle up, and once more showed his teeth.

"It is my turn now," I said to myself, as I raised the rifled carbine I carried. "Look out now," I whispered to the Caïd, "and see where my ball goes."

As I spoke, I took careful aim and fired. There

was a puff of smoke, a sharp report which went echoing amongst the rocks as if it would never end, and the lion uttered a low, snarling growl, laying down his ears like an angry cat; but he did not budge an inch.

"You hit the rock," said the Caïd, "and the splinters of stone flew all about him."

"Better luck next time," I muttered. And I set to and began to recharge, when the lion uttered another tremendous roar, turned round, and looked down at us as if to say "good-bye," and then, giving two or three bounds from rock to rock, went off at an easy trot and disappeared.

We were all on the alert, and began to climb after him, but without getting another glimpse of the great beast, while now the Kabyles began to quarrel one with the other for not having reloaded and fired again.

"Ah," said I, rather maliciously, to the old Kabyle, as I stopped panting and sat down on a piece of rock that was almost hot enough to blister—"Ah, depend upon it, he looked upon us with the most supreme contempt."

"Yes," he replied, in all seriousness, "it is as you say, and all through that lie told by Adam."

Among the Icebergs.

CHAPTER XIII.

"THAT 'ere? That 'ere's Upervivik, that is," said old Brunyee, in answer to one of my questions—"a sort of a hugger-me-buff place, miss. 'Taint Danish, nor it aint Esquimaux, nor nothing else; but, mind you, it's a spot where we may pick up a bit of news of the *Dawn*."

We sailed up into the little harbour—a still, solemn-looking place; and the simple people gave us a warm welcome, and were ready enough to sell us such provisions as they had; but they could only give us the same answer that others had given us at the different settlements where we had landed on our way up—

"No, the *Dawn* had not been seen."

"Not that that means anything, miss," said the old boatswain. "Whalers come and whalers go, again and again, and only trouble themselves to touch where they find it necessary. Mark my words, Capen Grant's been venturesome. He's a young man, it was his first voyage, and what he wanted to do was to bring home a fine full cargo. Here it is, then, plain as deck planking:—

"Now, my men," he says, 'here's a fine summer, the ice is well open, and where people aint been before, there's the place for us to get most fish or most seal. What do you say?'

"Well, what would they say, miss, but just the same as a chuckle-headed set of sailors would say, if you want 'em to do anything that seems easy, and likely to put money in their pockets? Why, 'Yes,' of course.

"Right," says he, 'and we'll have a fine lot of stuff tried out, my lads,' and with his ship's nose to the norrard—off he goes. And no doubt they've got a fine lot of ile on board, only before they could get back they were nipped somewhere up in one of

the bays right up in the north; and there they stick, unless they've been thawed out again."

"Do you think that?" I said, earnestly, looking searchingly the while in his face, "or is it only to comfort me?"

"Think it, bless your heart, I feel as sure of it as can be. But here's the skipper, ask him."

"Ask him what?" said Captain Pash, who had heard the words.

"Brunyee thinks that they must be in one of the bays to the north."

"Nor'-west, I say," was the response—"unless they're up in Walstenholme Sound. But there, my dear, they may be anywhere. We'll go on, as we have done, searching every bay we pass, and asking of the Esquimaux that we shall begin to meet often now; and when I find that we can't safely get on any farther without risk of being caught, why, I shall turn back."

"And then—what then, Captain Pash?"

"Why, then we must go home, my dear, that's all—we can do no more."

I turned away, sick at heart; for his words sent a chill through me. We seemed to be doing so little, going along so easily, when perhaps those we sought were perishing amongst the snow.

I was thinking of going back, when Stephen Ellerby came up, and, to my surprise, asked me if I was satisfied with the progress we were making—did I want more to be done?

I did not answer—I could not; for I seemed to read in an instant all that his words conveyed. He looked upon the expedition as absolutely hopeless; but being still, after his fashion, devoted to me, he was trying to humour me in every possible way, so as to earn my gratitude and ensure his repayment in the future.

I tried to master myself; but I could not just then, for it seemed so hard that, in spite of all my confidence in the existence of those we sought for, nearly every one else should at heart look upon it as a myth of my imagination.

I said something—incoherent, I am sure—and then hurried below to Ann and Mrs. Pash, whose manner towards me I now began to interpret in the same way, although, poor souls, they were incessant in their attentions and endeavours to minister to my comfort.

I had noticed, though, that Ann had grown far less sanguine, letting me know it by hints; and during our stay at the little settlement, which was only short, I found her talking more than once to Mrs. Pash, and I left the cabin, feeling bitterly at heart that the same idea was gaining ground against me—that I was mad.

Onward we sailed through that wonderful sea, now clear and bright, now patched with fragments of ice of every shape. Sometimes we passed huge cliffs, against which the sea thundered and foamed, and high up on whose white sides, on ledge after ledge, sat sea birds innumerable, while others whistled, screamed, and flew backwards and forwards in clouds.

It almost seems like a dream now, as I recall the sapphire bergs glittering in the sun, and the huge glaciers, like some half-tenacious, half-frozen

mass of ice, slowly being poured down the valley between huge, frowning, snow-covered cliffs. Slides and slips of ice and rock came thundering down at times, as we sailed close in shore, making the ship to rock in the turmoil of the water. Honeycombed, half-rotten masses of ice floated towards us, and threatened to topple over upon our deck, to crush us under like a fragile shell. Then we would be stopped by field-ice, till, search being made, a river-like opening would be found, up which we sailed, winding here and there, but ever progressing towards the north.

I was in dread daily lest I should hear the announcement from the captain that we must now turn back, but it did not come; while now, in place of the silent, almost solemn voyage, there were adventures almost every hour. Loose pieces of ice had to be avoided; then we were stopped, and to us it seemed that our voyage was at an end; but no, the ice would open again, showing dark water passages in advance; and up these sometimes we sailed, sometimes were dragged by means of ice anchors and ropes.

At last the day I had dreaded came, and I went on deck, to find Captain Pash, Mr. Solly, and Stephen Ellerby together, evidently talking earnestly; till, catching sight of me, they stopped short.

I knew what it all meant, though; and I spared them from breaking their determination to me.

"You were talking about returning, Captain Pash?" I said.

"Well, my dear, you've hit it—you have indeed."

"But when?"

"This very day, my dear—this very hour. If it hadn't been for you coming on deck, I should have had her head put round at once, and you'd never have been the wiser without consulting the binnacle. Not that I'd ha' kept it from you. The fact is, my dear, I think we've done all we can do; and if we stay any longer, the season's so far advanced now, that we sha'n't get back again."

"But one day," I said, earnestly—"try one day more. I know there are great obstacles in the way; but force the ship as far to the north as you can in these next twenty-four hours, and then, if we meet with no signs of the frozen-in vessel, I will not oppose your turning back."

Captain Pash hesitated, and turned to Mr. Solly, who shook his head; when I started, for Stephen Ellerby spoke.

"I think Miss Wynne's request is reasonable, Captain Pash," he said. "Suppose we keep on for another day. If I have any authority here, I freely give it."

"Which you haven't, no more than a baby," muttered Captain Pash, as he again shook his head; but directly after, he spoke aloud—

"Well, if we're caught, don't blame me. We're far up now, you know, and it's getting late; but as you like—I'll try on for another day, and then back we must go, even if we've done no good. I know what it is up here in the dark days of winter, with seventy degrees of frost killing you by inches, let alone scurvy. But, howsoever, one day won't stop us, I dare say, and I'll give way to you; but no farther, mind."

I caught Stephen Ellerby's eye as I stepped forward to thank Captain Pash, and again a shudder of horror passed through me; for I felt that he was slowly gaining ground, that he had made up his mind to win, and patience was to prove his friend.

CHAPTER XIV.

FOR the rest of that day we sailed on in sight of shore, if that icy barrier can be called shore; and as we slowly went forward, the coast line was anxiously scanned for some vestige of the missing vessel, but all in vain; and the night came, cold, glittering, starlight, bright as I had never seen it in our own land.

The next day dawned cold and grey, with the wind coming in puffs and then dying away into a calm; and still, in obedience to his promise, Captain Pash kept on; but as soon as the twenty-four hours had expired the vessel's head was swung round, and we began to move to the south, my heart aching the while, for I began to realise the fact that our voyage had been in vain.

"If you'll take my advice, my dear, you'll go below," said Captain Pash, coming to where I leaned against the bulwarks. "We're going to have a storm, with snow and cold and all sorts; and you'll be snugged down there, with my old woman, than here."

He strode forward the next moment to give some order, and old Brunyee, with a rope in his hand, came to my side.

"Don't you be down-hearted, miss," he said, shaking his head. "We've got our head turned home'ards, but we aint home yet; nor we sha'n't get home nayther this year, mark my words if we do. We shall be laid up for the winter safe, for we've come too far. So don't you be down-hearted, for we may find 'em yet, and we've got nine months good to do it in."

He was called away then, and an hour after I began to know what the perils of the Arctic Ocean were, as darkness came on; and from time to time, as we scudded along, there came heavy blow after heavy blow against the vessel's side, as masses of ice were driven against her, till we were brought to under the shelter of an enormous berg, which screened us from the wind; but we were grinding up against its side the whole night through, and the morning dawned to show a prospect that was terrible in the extreme.

Ice, ice everywhere, and a storm of snow falling, falling, and then coming in furious gusts to cover deck and rigging. There was a little dark water here and there, but it seemed as if the storm had driven all the ice of the bay against us, to leave us in a little cove, with icy rock right and left, and the huge berg that had been our protection right in the entrance.

"I thought we should have it, my dear," said Captain Pash to me, with a sad look; "but never mind, if we get loose again we'll sail homeward; and if we don't, why we'll try what a land search will do, and good luck to us."

He had to leave my side the next moment, for the wind began to come in fierce puffs; and then, with a leap that seemed literally to push the vessel's masts over, so that the ends of the yards touched

the side of the great iceberg, down it came upon us, howling through the rigging, and darkening the air with snow.

That passed off, though, rapidly, leaving merely a good steady breeze, and before us a wide, dark opening, like a river, running through the ice; and along this we sailed easily, sometimes with the water a mile wide, sometimes with it so narrow that, from time to time, the ship's side grated against the rough ice, which rose as high as the deck.

I saw, as I stayed on deck, that two or three times the captain and mate stood talking together, and gazed very anxiously at the compass, seeming to be far from satisfied; while as for the men, they worked on patiently enough, hauling at ropes which were covered with snow and ice, and which rattled in the blocks as they were drawn through, while twice over the sails crackled as if stiffly frozen.

For winter had come upon us suddenly; and it almost seemed as if the wish of my heart was to be fulfilled, and that we were to be stayed from returning.

"Aint I right, miss?" said old Brunyee, as he coiled down a stiff rope by my side. "It's a wintering for us, safe."

Brunyee seemed the next day, though, as if he was to turn out a false prophet; for the sea at day-break was clearer, and the day fine, the vessel sailing, as it seemed to me, far to the south, and I said so.

"Nothing of the sort, miss—nothing of the sort. There's a strong current here, and I'll bet a new Jarsey as to-morrow morning all as we've done to-day's undone again."

The old man was right; for it came on to blow again towards night, so that our little ship was drifting far away again to the north. Once the captain contrived to get her under the lee of a promontory, but the sea rose so strongly here that he dared not stay, lest we should be dashed against the rocks close by; and he let the ship drive before the wind till he got it close behind a huge iceberg, getting anchors out, and holes cut in the ice to fit them in, when, with a couple of cables out, the vessel rose and fell uneasily, hour after hour, with all white around—white foam, ice, and snow.

"There, my pretty, what do you think of it now?" said Brunyee, squeezing the snow out of his whiskers. "We're snug now, aint we? What could you wish for better, driving doo north at eight knots an hour?"

"Would they have such weather as this to deal with?" I asked.

"Weather as this, my pretty?" he said, laughing; "why, this is nothing at all, only a snowy squall. But, now, you do as I tell you—you go down below, and stay till it's better weather."

"But are we sailing homeward, Brunyee?"

"No, we aint, and we aint going to, if we had ten thousand clever captains aboard. Our old man's all right, and he had gone to half a mile as far as he dare, and he knew it. If we'd turned back then, we was safe; but that another day of yours did it, and we sha'n't get back; and every one on board knows it now, and all that's got to be done is to get as snug a berth as we can, and see what good we can do in searching over the ice."

It may sound strange; but there, in the midst of that wild turmoil of the elements, I went below, to kneel down in my little cabin, and thank God for the good fortune that had befallen me; and as hour after hour went by, for a whole week of wild, rough, stormy weather, I began to see more clearly the truth of the old sailor's words. For when the week was at an end, and a clear day enabled observations to be taken, we were found to have drifted three hundred miles, a great deal of it being to the northward.

There being, as far as could be seen, open water now all around, with only a berg floating here and there, the vessel's head was turned round, and we began to sail south once more, with a favourable breeze. The air was cold, but the sun shone brightly overhead; and, as I strained my eyes to gaze along the ice, I thought of what August would be at home, and then my spirits sank once more, for it seemed that our search was indeed ended now.

Ann was by my side, watching me intently, but her turning, as if to go, woke me to the fact that Stephen Ellerby was approaching; and I should have followed Ann, but by his adroit management he cut me off, and I was compelled to listen to him—a strange, shuddering feeling creeping through me as I heard his words.

Oh, how plain it all was! He was freezing my heart with despair as he spoke, and he knew it well, as he calmly showed me the folly and madness of the enterprise, and how safe he felt of at last reaching his goal.

"As we are so near in upon this side of the bay, Miss Wynne," he said, "I have requested Captain Pash to go closer in, so that we may sweep with our glasses what is quite new ground. Have you any other wish? I will indeed see that it is attended to. Pray let us be friends, Miss Wynne—Jessie. Forgive me if I was strongly opposed to all this search, and tried hard to prevent it. I am sure you will, in calm moments, see that I have good excuse for my conduct. What, no word—no answer?"

He turned away, sighing deeply, and leaving me trembling; for while I felt strong to resist him when he was fierce and angry, this new plan of his gave me incalculable terror, and I was more distracted than I dared to own, even to myself.

Were we to sail south now, or were we to be bound up here amidst the ice, whose presence I had learned to detect by the peculiar appearance of the sky above where it lay? At one time, all appeared so clear and open, that there seemed to be nothing to prevent the vessel sailing onward; but evening came once more, with the wind rising, and on going upon deck after tea, it was found, as if by magic, ice had risen all around us, and close in huge masses were churning and grinding together, coming each moment nearer and nearer, till shock after shock came the blows of the great fragments, as the vessel struck against them; while every effort was being made to force the ship onward to where there seemed to be open water, a mile or so on in advance.

Then came a time with the wind rushing and roaring, and the huge pieces of ice crashing together as they were forced into contact by the heaving sea—masses, house-like in size, rising one above

another, as if moved by some invisible force from below, till piled up in rugged cliffs, white and threatening, as they collided with a grinding, crushing, and splintering noise.

There was not a man below, but all crowded together upon deck, to watch, in the dim evening light, the awful throes of Nature, each moment expecting that some mass of ice would fall upon the helpless ship, to crush her as if of egg-shell instead of the stoutest timber.

For awhile she was floating in what appeared to be a little dock cut in the ice; but as I stood I could plainly see that this dock was gradually narrowing—the sides approaching, so that it could not be long before the *Ice Blink* would be crushed, and we should have to take refuge upon the treacherous ice. But no, there was respite for us yet; and I heard an exclamation of joy rise from several throats as, after a fearful deafening crash of breaking ice, the little dock began gradually to widen, till it was fully a hundred yards across, and right ahead, leading towards where a huge cliff towered up in the darkness of the coming night, there was a zigzag canal of dark water, along which we sailed for some time, to be once more free.

The sails were trimmed, and the vessel went scudding along all through that night; but by morning there were again troubles; for, slowly appearing before us, like ghostly spectres from the thick grey folds of the fogs that had hidden them, came berg after berg, no longer bright and glittering castles of sapphire, mother-of-pearl, and gold, but grim, icy monsters, ragged and jagged, and abounding in points which grinned now and then from amongst the foamy breakers that wreathed the base, and every one of which was sufficient to cause our destruction.

There was no retreat from them, as they crowded down upon us. The only chance was to thread our way through them; and I watched with admiration the stern coolness with which the sailors stood ready, each at his post, awaiting the orders that came from time to time, as sail was increased or shortened to avoid the great grey islands urged through the water by some mighty under-current, ploughing through the waves as they advanced.

We had escaped all save one or two, when, as if by some hidden force, a huge monster came swiftly down upon us, rocking frightfully in its course, but with a slow, heavy majesty that was almost appalling. It was evident that it was about to totter right over, or to break up, and, as it seemed to us, the moment of its fall or dissolution would be just as it was abreast of our vessel; and there we stood waiting, with hardly drawn breath, for what seemed to be the inevitable end.

A GENTLEMAN who fancied himself a pendulum always went upon tick, and never discovered his delusion until he was carefully wound up in the Bankruptcy Court.

A MOTHER, trying to get her little daughter of three years to sleep one night, said, "Anna, why don't you try to go to sleep?" "I am trying," she replied. "But you haven't shut your eyes." "Well, can't help it; umis comes unbuttoned."

A Rhinoceros Story.

COKE entertained us with an account of a most spirited adventure he had just had with a rhinoceros.

When some distance from home he suddenly came upon three in some low grass, and was able to creep within a few yards of them without being seen; and conceiving the bold design of trying to bag them all, he gave two a right-and-left, and re-loading rapidly, before they had discovered their enemy, took a shot at the third. The first two decamped, but this one, whilst more boldly looking about him, received another ball from the ten-bore, in the side, and then, catching sight of Coke, charged straight at him.

Coke, guided by the current belief that a rhinoceros never turns when he has once made off, stepped a little on one side, to give him plenty of room to pass on, but instead of doing so he changed his course accordingly, and there was nothing left for Coke to do but to run for his life to the nearest mimosa tree, at the same time dodging about from side to side to elude his persecutor.

This was without effect, though the rhinoceros once lost ground by a tumble; so upon reaching a small mimosa bush, he made a wide circle round it. Still the rhinoceros followed, and round and round the tree he chased Coke, the circle becoming gradually smaller, until the latter, finding that the distance between them was also diminishing, whilst he was rapidly becoming exhausted, made up his mind that his only hope of escape was to get to a neighbouring wood, and he therefore made a push for it.

The rhinoceros now cut off a corner, by trampling down the mimosa in continuing the chase; but Coke reached the wood first, and then falling down among the bushes quite exhausted, he managed to elude the eye of his would-be enemy as it passed on.

After a short rest to recover his breath, and when rejoined by his hunter, he followed up the track, and very soon found the rhinoceros lying under a tree, and then with one shot put an end to its dangerous propensity.

An Observation.

"OH, we make it hotter for export." Such was the answer given to your Correspondent by the courteous cicerone who conducted him over the extensive premises of Messrs. Goodall, Backhouse, and Co., of Leeds, to his inquiry as to the reason the two immense vats, containing some thousands of gallons of the Yorkshire Relish, should bear different endorsements; one having emblazoned on its rotund figure the word "Home," while its twin brother was decorated with "Export;" for your Correspondent has been in the north, not with Captain Nares, but with a captain commanding a swarm of busy bees in the many-celled hive of the aforesaid firm, and who kindly gave him a glimpse of the process of manufacture of the specialties for which they have become so widely known. To describe all that came under your Correspondent's

notice would exceed the limits of space at his disposal, but a brief notice of the visit may prove of interest to our readers.

We—I adopt the editorial—were shown capacious warehouses for the storage of drugs, huge receptacles meeting us on either side, containing enough nauseous compounds to physic the whole of the population of this great city of ours. Next we were introduced to the “cool” cellar, of Brobdingnagian proportions, devoted to the storage of extracts and syrups liable to fermentation. From this chilly atmosphere we wander into a climate approaching the tropical, but not smelling of balmy Araby; for we are in the laboratory, and simmering in large copper pans, heated by steam, are decoctions emitting odours far from pleasant. Close to this is the bottle-washing department, where our guide talks of contracting for two million bottles at a time, so that a faint idea may be formed of the numbers requiring the application of water and small shot—this being the only efficacious means of washing.

Away we go up large flights of stairs—here into a room crammed from floor to ceiling with pill boxes, stored with the greatest regularity, and we shuddered as we thought of the countless numbers of globules those receptacles were destined to receive. From pill boxes, a few steps took us to gallipots and bottles for the drug trade, of all sorts and sizes, from the tiny toothache tincture phial to the elaborately decorated glass jars and rotund bottles, so familiar with their cabalistic characters in the windows of chemists’ shops, and so greatly admired by the writer in those halcyon days of his youth when peg-tops or marbles had so much to do with his happiness.

Up more stairs, and we are among the “Lasses O,” and truly amongst the sweets, for here were bright-eyed damsels rapidly filling jars with honey. The luscious substance is so inviting that we taste, to the no small amusement of the onlookers.

We are now amongst another bevy of girl workers, nimbly weighing and making up into tiny packets, spices, powders, salts, &c., the whole performed with a celerity and neatness that would put to the blush our polite but methodical chemist round the corner.

On and on we go, until we are beginning to weary, but the “game is worth the candle;” the liveliest scene of all being here, for we are now amongst the Yorkshire Relish, and like the Laureate’s “Charge of the Light Brigade,” Relish “to the right of us, to the left of us, in front of us”—in fact, all round us. There to our right stand two immense vats, like gigantic sentinels who have thriven so well that they have run all to body. Overlooking the busy scene, affixed to these are bottling machines, each capable of instantly filling some twenty bottles. These are attended to by hands whose duty it is to keep some hundreds of their compeers at work in stoppering, labelling, wiping off moisture, and wrapping. This finishing touch being completed, they are packed in gross cases, and away they go down an immense lift to the packing-room, whence they are carted to the great iron road for despatch to all parts of the world. For this sauce has in a few years, by dint of perseverance on the part of its parents, achieved an unqualified and thoroughly deserved success. It is

cheap, and unquestionably as good as its higher priced rivals. The number of bottles turned out daily amounts, on an average, to one hundred and five gross—this will give some idea of the consumption. Our journey is now nearly ended; but, to ease our weary steps, we jump into the lift, and are quickly deposited on the next floor, from whence we are soon in “my lady’s chamber”—for here, presided over by a fairy, was a very surfeit of riches in the shape of Christmas bonbons, beautifully designed, and coloured boxes containing scents, and all those tasty knickknacks which will make many a little face wreath itself with smiles, and many a little eye glisten with rapture at this festive season.

Before completing this paper, your Correspondent cannot help remarking how greatly he was impressed with the cleanliness everywhere apparent: this is explained by the fact that cleanliness is one of the rules of this firm, any breach of which entails a fine on the offender, the said fine going not into the employers’ pockets, but to the funds of the Leeds’ Infirmary; and, while mentioning the latter, it may here be remarked that one halfpenny is stopped weekly from each *employé* for that splendid institution. The sum is so trifling in itself as not to be missed; but in the aggregate—where some hundreds of hands are employed—amounts yearly to no inconsiderable sum. Messrs. Goodall, Backhouse, and Co. set an example that should find many followers in the metropolis.

The First Railway Accident.

I WILL tell you something of the events on the 15th —, as, though you may be acquainted with the circumstances of poor Mr. Huskisson’s death, none but an eye-witness of the whole scene can form a conception of it.

I told you that we had had places given to us, and it was the main purpose of our returning from Birmingham to Manchester to be present at what promised to be one of the most striking events in the scientific annals of our country.

We started on Wednesday last, to the number of about eight hundred people, in carriages constructed as I before described to you. The most intense curiosity and excitement prevailed, and, though the weather was uncertain, enormous masses of densely packed people lined the road, shouting and waving hats and handkerchiefs as we flew by them. What with the sight and sound of these cheering multitudes, and the tremendous velocity with which we were borne past them, my spirits rose to the true champagne height, and I never enjoyed anything so much as the first hour of our progress.

I had been unluckily separated from my mother in the first distribution of places, but by an exchange of seats which she was enabled to make, she rejoined me when I was at the height of my ecstasy, which was considerably damped by finding that she was frightened to death, and intent upon nothing but devising means of escaping from a situation which appeared to her to threaten with instant annihilation herself and all her travelling companions.

While I was chewing the cud of this disappoint-

ment, which was rather bitter, as I had expected her to be as delighted as myself with our excursion, a man flew by us, calling out through a speaking-trumpet to stop the engine, for that somebody in the directors' carriage had sustained an injury.

We were all stopped accordingly, and presently a hundred voices were heard exclaiming that Mr. Huskisson was killed.

The confusion that ensued was indescribable: the calling out from carriage to carriage to ascertain the truth, the contrary reports which were sent back to us, the hundred questions eagerly uttered at once, and the repeated and urgent demands for surgical assistance, created a sudden turmoil that was quite sickening. At last we distinctly ascertained that the unfortunate man's thigh was broken.

From Lady W——, who was in the duke's carriage, and within three yards of the spot where the accident happened, I had the following details, the horror of witnessing which we were spared through our situation behind the great carriage.

The engine had stopped to take in a supply of water, and several of the gentlemen in the directors' carriage had jumped out to look about them. Lord W——, Count Batthyany, Count Matuscenitz, and Mr. Huskisson, among the rest, were standing talking in the middle of the road, when an engine on the other line, which was parading up and down merely to show its speed, was seen coming down upon them like lightning. The most active of those in peril sprang back into their seats; Lord W—— saved his life only by rushing behind the duke's carriage, and Count Matuscenitz had but just leaped into it, with the engine all but touching his heels as he did so; while poor Mr. Huskisson, less active from the effects of age and ill-health, bewildered too by the frantic cries of "Stop the engine! Clear the track!" that resounded on all sides, completely lost his head, looked helplessly to the right and left, and was instantaneously prostrated by the fatal machine, which dashed down like a thunderbolt upon him, and passed over his leg, smashing and mangling it in the most horrible way. (Lady W—— said she distinctly heard the crushing of the bone.)

So terrible was the effect of the appalling accident that, except that ghastly "crushing," and poor Mrs. Huskisson's piercing shriek, not a sound was heard or a word uttered among the immediate spectators of the catastrophe.

Lord W—— was the first to raise the poor sufferer; and calling to aid his surgical skill, which is considerable, he tied up the severed artery, and for a time, at least, prevented death by loss of blood. Mr. Huskisson was then placed in a carriage with his wife and Lord W——; and the engine, having been detached from the directors' carriage, conveyed them to Manchester.

So great was the shock produced upon the whole party by this event, that the Duke of Wellington declared his intention not to proceed, but to return immediately to Liverpool. However, on its being represented to him that the whole population of Manchester had turned out to witness the procession, and that a disappointment might give rise to riots and disturbances, he consented to go on, and

gloomily enough the rest of the journey was accomplished.

We had intended returning to Liverpool by the railroad, but Lady W——, who seized upon me in the midst of the crowd, persuaded us to accompany her home, which we gladly did. Lord W—— did not return till past ten o'clock, at which hour he brought the intelligence of Mr. Huskisson's death.

I need not tell you of the sort of whispering awe which this event threw over our whole circle; and yet, great as was the horror excited by it, I could not help feeling how evanescent the effect of it was, after all.

The shuddering terror of seeing our fellow-creature thus struck down by our side, and the breathless thankfulness for our own preservation, rendered the first evening of our party at Heaton almost solemn; but the next day the occurrence became a subject of earnest, it is true, but free discussion; and after that was alluded to with almost as little apparent feeling as if it had not passed under our eyes, and within the space of a few hours.—*Atlantic Monthly*.

The Egotist's Note-book.

A CAPITAL incident has occurred in the Hall probate case. Lieutenant Atherton, of the 5th Dragoon Guards, in giving his evidence, said that his grandfather wished him to join the army, and had no objection to his entering a cavalry regiment. "But," added the lieutenant, "he did express regret that I did not join the Scots Greys, because he rather liked the Scotch—they were careful people."

The Attorney-General: "Your grandfather supposed that as the 7th Dragoons was called 'Scots Greys,' the regiment must be necessarily composed of Scotchmen?"

Lieutenant Atherton: "Yes."

"Is it so?" inquired the Attorney-General.

To which the lieutenant, amidst a roar of laughter, naively replied—

"No; I believe they are mostly Irishmen."

A truly Hibernian state of affairs.

Turning over Lord Herbert's "Life and Reign of King Henry VIII.," a day or two ago, I came across the following passage, relating to the year 1533:—"The chief laws enacted were: that all victuals should be sold by the larger kind of weight, called avoirdupois; that the price of a pound of beef or pork should be a halfpenny at most, and of mutton or veal three farthings, and less for where it was usually sold for less." Many a paterfamilias, buying his Christmas beef, may think that Parliament nowadays might just as well look after the price of meat as after the law of hypothec, or the maintenance of turnpike trusts. But, to borrow a City phrase, the only "muttons" that members now trouble themselves with are "mutton Turks."

The *Times* made a splendid blunder a few days ago. The London School Board has been sending

round a circular to the other school boards in the kingdom, asking them to join with it in trying to induce Parliament to obtain a Royal commission to consider the best manner of improving and simplifying the spelling of the English language. It seems that the children in the board schools can't spell the language as it is. The *Times*, commenting in an ironical vein upon this circular, said: "We are not likely to destroy our whole printed literature, to cut ourselves adrift from the past, and to turn our alphabet upside down, simply because little boys and girls are apt sometimes to spell *Jerusalem* with a 'G,' or are puzzled about the letter 'h.'" Certainly not; but what a figure that leader-writer would look if he spelt "*Jerusalem*" in that fashion at a spelling bee!

All vestrymen, and most people who take notice of parochial matters, understand what is meant by the "refreshment question." The same question is just now agitating the Legislative Council at Barbadoes. For some time past the Assembly, or Parliament, has been supplied with refreshments at the public expense. Every year the amount has been increasing, until at length the Council has declined to sanction the vote. One member, in his indignation, asserted that "these refreshments began with sandwiches, cheese, and ginger-beer, and have now grown up to ice-creams and pepper-punch." Ice-creams and pepper-punch! Why, I've seen vestrymen in this country sit down to a feast worthy of Epicurus, and drink themselves into a state of sublime stupefaction on champagne at nearly half-a-guinea a bottle—and all at the ratepayers' expense.

We hear a great deal about "Irish grievances," but here is a case in which the boot is on the other leg. There are two colonial governorships, worth £10,000 a-year—namely, Canada and Victoria; they are held by Irishmen. Two of the three governorships, worth about £7,000 a-year, namely Ceylon and New South Wales, are held by Irishmen; and, in addition to these, Irishmen hold the governorships of Hong Kong, South Australia, the Mauritius, Western Australia, Griqualand West, Malacca, and the Falkland Islands—some of the best prizes in the service. Mr. Butt and his followers prate about Home Rule; but it's clear that the sons of down-trodden Erin don't object to do a little ruling abroad—when there's a good salary attached to the work.

Below will be found some oddities in advertising:—

- "Wood and coal split."
- "Two young women want washing."
- "Teeth extracted with great pains."
- "Babies taken and finished in ten minutes by a country-photographer."

The next appeared in a London newspaper, under the head of "For Sale":—

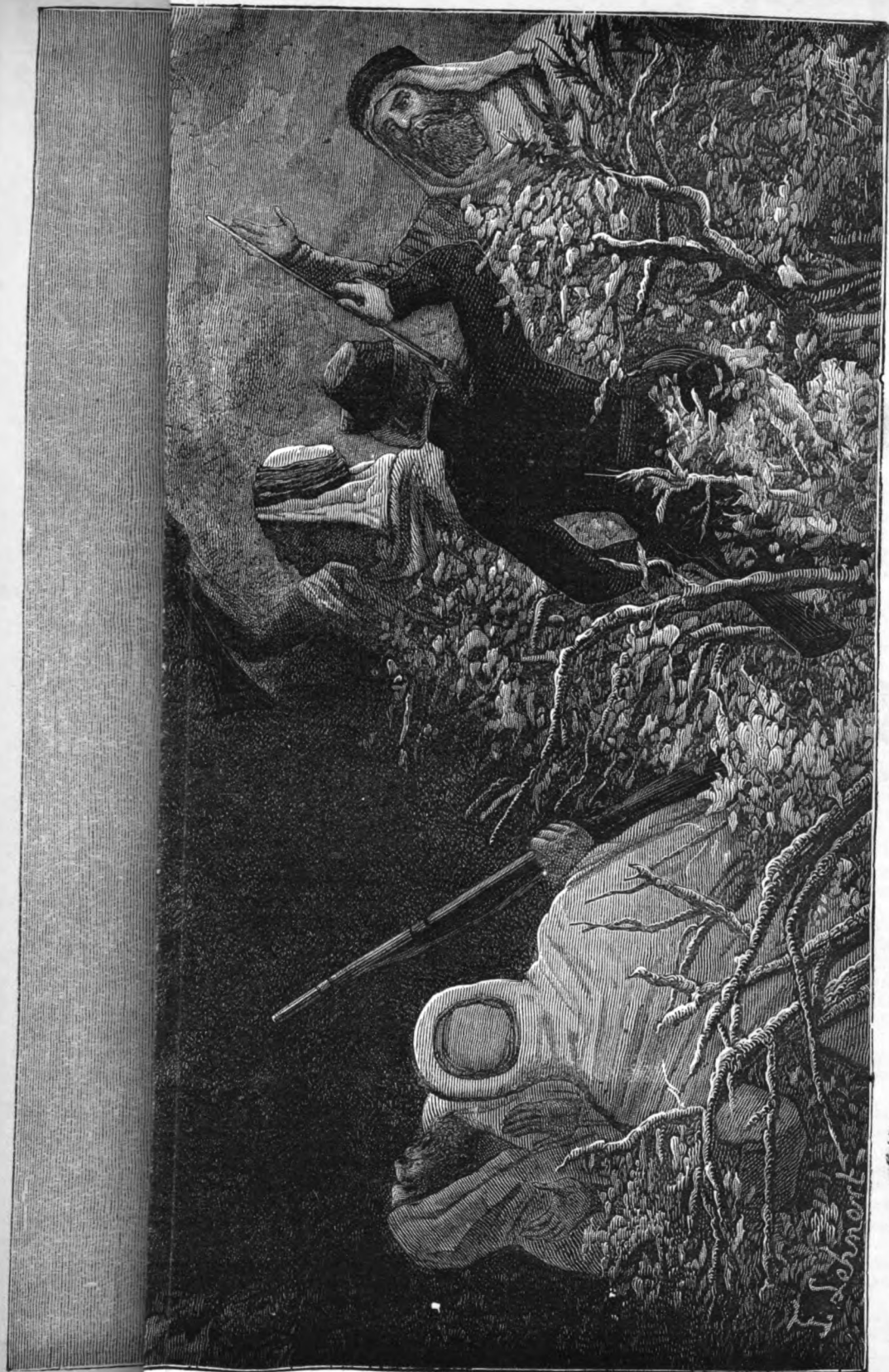
"Pianoforte, cottage, seven octaves, the property of a lady leaving England in a remarkably elegant case on beautifully carved supports."

A very neat device for preventing burglary has

just been brought out in the United States. All the doors in a bank are so arranged that they can only be opened when two knobs or handles are turned simultaneously. Now, these knobs are in connection with powerful batteries. A thief seizes one knob, and no effect follows. He then uses both his hands, taking a knob in each. Immediately his howls follow; he is unable to let the knobs go, because of the violent muscular contractions set up. The torture is fearful, and the would-be robber constitutes, in consequence—if he be a man of strong lungs—a most admirable alarm.

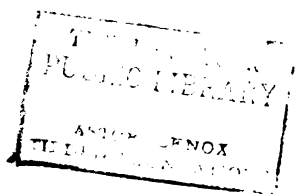
Here is a curious optical illusion to wile away an hour on a winter's night, and to interest all:—Take a sheet of stiff writing-paper, and fold it into a tube an inch in diameter. Apply it to the right eye, and look steadfastly through it, focusing the eye on any convenient object. Keep the left eye open. Now place the left hand, held palm upward, edgeways against the side of the paper tube, and about an inch or two above its lower end. The astonishing effect will be produced of a hole, apparently of the size of the cross section of the tube, made through the left hand. This is the hole in which we propose to materialize another and smaller hole. As we need a genuine aperture, and it would be inconvenient to make one in the left hand, let a sheet of white paper be substituted therefor, and similarly held. Just at the part of the paper where the hole equalling in diameter the orifice of the tube appears, make an opening $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch in diameter. Now stare intently into the tube, and the second hole, defined by its difference of illumination, will be seen floating in the first hole, and yet both will be transparent. The illusion—for of course it is one of those odd pranks our binocular vision plays upon us—is certainly one of the most curious ever devised. Besides, here is the actual hole clearly visible, and yet there is no solid body to be seen to define its edges. It is not a mere spot of light, because, if a page of print be regarded, the lines within the boundaries of the little hole will not coincide at all with those surrounding it and extending to the edges of the large apparent aperture. Each eye obviously transmits an entirely different impression to the brain, and that organ, unable to disentangle them, lands us in the palpable absurdity of a materialized hole.

Now that winter has come, and ladies are looking forward to many a pleasant evening spent in the enjoyment of the dance, they often forget the attendant fatigue, until the exhaustion of the following day reminds them that every pleasure has its alloy. This fatigue is in great measure produced by the tight ligature or garter with which the stockings are fastened, hindering the free circulation of the blood. Medical men are unanimous in declaring the use of garters to be a most fruitful source of disease. Every lady desiring health and comfort should at once provide herself with a pair of the new patent stocking suspenders, made by Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London. The price is only 3s. per pair, of any draper, or post free for two extra stamps.



"A TERRIBLE ROAR ROSE ABOVE US."—(Page 253.)





Three Hundred Virgins.

A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS.

CHAPTER XIX.—CRUSHING THE REBELS.

DEBORAH decided the question by beating at the door of her cabin, and calling for help; with the result that a loud, hurrying noise began to be heard, which soon ran through the ship, and shrieks and cries soon followed, showing the alarm of those below.

Helston walked to the cabin door, and, in a loud voice, told the prisoner to be silent.

"Help—help!" shrieked Deborah.

"I tink, ma'am, you 'pare your breff," said 'Thello, laughing; "de ladies am all 'tickler engage."

"This is your doing, Grace Monroe," shrieked Deborah, in her impotent rage.

And she beat at the bulkhead.

"Is Miss Monroe in here?" said Helston, at the next cabin door.

"Yes, she is," said Mary Dance, sharply; "what do you want?"

"Perhaps you will both step out, at your convenience," said Helston, loudly.

And he turned the key.

Mary threw open the door, and, holding Grace Monroe's arm, they walked out upon the deck; where, far from taking a suppliant tone, Helston said, firmly—

"Mr. Laurent and I have decided that it was time to put an end to all this mummery, and we have come on board to do so. Miss Monroe, Mary Dance, you may rely upon receiving respect and the treatment that your position deserves. I ask you, will you undertake to return to your position of emigrants under our charge, or must I request you to go ashore for the present?"

"Mr. Helston," said Grace, in agitated tones, as she gazed tremblingly in the firm, hard face before her, "what are you going to do?"

"Treat women as women—as those who call upon us for protection and respect; but if necessary, to use force to gain the upper hand over those mad creatures who have driven their companions wild."

"Mr. Helston," said Mary Dance, quietly, "we have never fought against the discipline of the ship. You see, we are prisoners."

"Then will you both go below, and see if you can bring these women to reason? Miss Monroe, I am sorry to behave harshly, but the circumstances of the case compel it. Now, listen to me—both. Will you aid in bringing these people under control?"

"Yes," said Mary Dance, gazing admiringly at him.

"And you, Miss Monroe?" said Helston, sharply.

"Yes, sir—I will do my best," she said, meekly.

And her heart throbbed, for she thought she had never seen him look so manly and handsome before. As a suppliant, she had loved him almost against her will; as one who commanded, she felt that she was his slave.

"Then go down below, both of you," said Helston, firmly. "You are our ambassadors—tell these women they came out in this ship under us, as their officers; and that, if they choose to forget their

sex, they forfeit all claim on us to be treated as women. Tell them," he continued, "that I feel myself answerable to the Government for their well-being, and that it is my duty to protect and aid them to the last. Therefore, if one, a dozen, a hundred, fight against the discipline of this ship, they make us, their officers, their enemies, and for the benefit of the whole they must suffer. You hear me?"

"Yes, sir, I hear," said Mary Dance.

And every word was distinctly heard, too, in the cabin by Deborah Burrows.

"Lastly," said Helston, "tell them that Mr. Laurent and I are well armed, and that, without hesitation, we shall use those arms upon those who will not submit."

"On women—on helpless women?" shouted Deborah, from the cabin.

"No," thundered Helston; "but upon mad creatures who have unsexed themselves, and led a pack of foolish women astray. Now, go!"

In spite of herself, Grace Monroe's eyes met those of Helston for an instant; but it was to find no softening love-light there: the man was roused, and he pointed imperiously to the hatchway, which Laurent and 'Thello stood ready to open; and she felt that she could kneel at his feet and kiss his hands.

"Stand back! below there, or we fire," shouted Laurent, as he threw up the hatch.

But Helston's words had been heard, and the women shrank away.

Grace and Mary Dance passed down, and the hatchway was clapped to behind them, Helston standing motionless upon the deck, and Laurent looking at him with admiration, as he said to himself—

"By Jove, what a captain he would have made!"

At the end of five minutes there was a knocking at the hatchway.

"Well?" said Helston, advancing.

And Mary Dance answered.

"Open the hatchway," said Helston, sharply.

And upon its being done, the two messengers stepped out.

"They all submit, sir," said Grace, quietly; "and they request that Deborah Burrows may be kept away from them."

"I'll take care of that," said Helston, grimly.

And Grace gazed at him wonderingly, as she asked herself—

"Is this the calm, quiet doctor?"

Then they were sent down the forecabin, and into the saloon, to come back with the same undertakings of submission.

"And now, sir," said Mary Dance, firmly, "I think I can answer for them all, if my influence is brought to bear upon them in place of that of Deborah Burrows. I have no feeling of bitterness against her; but she is to blame for all this."

"I know she is," said Helston, "and shall act accordingly. Now, throw open the hatches, and tell every one to come up."

Grace looked at him wonderingly, and her heart beat faster as she saw him stand aside till all the women were on deck, when he said, in a calm, sharp voice—

"We shall now go on with the same routine as that observed before the wreck. It is my wish to do all possible for your comfort as well as health; but, till help comes, every one must work. You, sir," to 'Thello, "return at once to your galley, and let the cooking be carried on as of old. You will have help appointed to you. You, Mary Dance, I appoint matron, *vice* Mrs. Kent, deceased; and if you practise any arbitrary harshness to any of the women, I shall call you to account, even as I shall severely punish any one who breaks your rules."

A pin might have been heard to drop upon the deck as he went on—

"You, Grace Monroe, I appoint the matron's aid; and you, Lee and Smith, chief assistants. Deborah Burrows will remain under confinement till further orders. Lastly, my good women, let me remind you that, by right of my appointment, I am governor of this island, and I exercise my right of seniority over Mr. Laurent, who is, by succession, Captain Laurent, in command of the *Zenobia*. Mind this, then, that my rule here over you will be rigid and stern, tempered with kindness; but, above all, I shall be quick to punish every offence. Now for breakfast."

The revolution was crushed, and he walked straight into the captain's cabin, to send for Mary Dance the next minute.

"Let this place be cleared out at once," he said, firmly. "Some of the women have been occupying it."

"Yes, sir," said Mary Dance, respectfully.

And she went out to join Grace.

"Oh, my darling," she whispered, "he's glorious. I could love him with all my heart."

Grace turned away, and the ship was all a buzz with preparation.

The next minute Laurent had followed Helston into the cabin, to hold out his hand.

"Thanks," he said, quietly. "Helston, I'll help you as long as I've breath."

Helston grasped his hand firmly, but his face remained stern, and his brow knit; for there was a question to solve yet.

What was to be done with Deborah Burrows?

CHAPTER XX.—THE ERUPTION.

THE revolution was, indeed, at an end. Deborah remained a close prisoner, and the work of the little colony went on; for, to a woman, they all fell into their places, and seemed to rejoice in being freed from a state of affairs that was growing irksome.

Weeks passed away in the exercise of preparation for the future. Pigs were killed and salted down, bread was made, fish were netted, and gardening went on. Helston's rules were of the most rigid, and he never gave way in the least. He and Laurent took their meals together, and thoroughly kept their distance; while to Grace Monroe and Mary they were always coldly polite.

"It is a necessity of the case," said Helston, talking one day upon the subject; "and believe me, Laurent, though our behaviour may seem harsh, if they are women worth winning they must applaud it, and honour us the more."

"But it seems very hard to the poor girls," said Laurent.

"But you have no rivals to fear," said Helston, quietly.

And the subject dropped.

Six months passed rapidly away, for all were busy, and it seemed as if release would never come.

The island still smiled in beauty, for it was ever a mingling of spring, summer, and autumn there; and the days glided on, when suddenly, on a calm, hot evening, when the beach was thronged by the women resting after the toil of the day, the whole island quivered with a tremendous shock, and the instant after there was a deafening roar, as of a thousand peals of thunder.

The women rushed hither and thither in affright, for the sea seemed suddenly to leap up towards them in a great wave; but just as they felt that they were about to be swallowed up, it ran back—down, down, for quite a quarter of a mile, leaving the *Zenobia* high and dry amongst the sand; and a silence that was absolutely awful followed, as a great black cloud gathered above their heads.

Helston was in the ship with Laurent, but they hurried out with the rest of the women, lest the wave should again rise.

The women ran shrieking round their leader as he came up from the ship, and on every hand the cry rose—

"What is it—an earthquake?"

The answer was there; for, with a tremendous report, a burst of flame came from the centre of the volcano, seeming to ascend quite a mile in the air; and against the vivid orange light the flagstaff with the ship's colours, which had been replaced by Helston's orders, was plainly to be seen.

The volcano, which had probably been quiescent for hundreds of years, was once more in eruption, the sole warnings the inhabitants of the island had received being a few flashes like lightning round the summit, and an occasional burst of muttering subterranean thunder.

The first question was where to go for safety, and the women clustered round, asking for advice which it was impossible to give; for now the black cloud seemed riven by fire, and then accompanied by a horrible sulphurous smell; then fell a shower of dust, quickly followed by darkness, so intense that, but for the flickering flashes of light from the mountain, it would have been impossible for one of the frightened crowd to have seen a neighbour.

"Keep all together," shouted Helston, as soon as he could make himself heard; "and let us go inland to the green knoll."

A hill about a quarter of a mile from the shore.

"But that is nearer the burning mountain," shrieked half a dozen trembling women.

"Yes, and farther from the sea, which may sweep us away if it rises again," cried Helston.

And without further opposition, but with tears, and cries and lamentations, the terrified crowd went towards the green knoll.

As they went, a hot blast, as from the mouth of a furnace, rushed by them, and whenever a flash came they could see the glorious vegetation of the island

drooping and withering away, the smaller leaves even turning crisp under the awful heat.

They reached the knoll in safety, and from this commanding spot could see that the eruption was fast gaining force—large red masses of fire were being thrown straight up, with awful reports, and, falling back into the crater, a wild, red glare lit up the sky; and at one point, where the dark edge of the crater was plainly to be seen, there was a vivid orange light; and then, as if the crater, with its fused rock, had boiled over, a thin, golden, jagged line, like a fixed flash of lightning, appeared: the lava was beginning to flow.

All below, though, was intensely dark—mist, a dust of ashes, and unwholesome gases seemed to float over the lower parts of the island, stifling to breathe, and threatening suffocation to the horror-stricken colonists.

But they were not the only affrighted creatures; twice over did a herd of the wild pigs rush frantically by, yelling and shrieking in fear; and, as the trembling women huddled together amidst the bushes on the knoll, they disturbed three serpents, which only uttered loud hisses, and glided slowly away.

"Who is this?" said Helston, as he went round his party, like a shepherd, with his flask, and helped several half-fainting women higher up.

"I—Laurent," was the answer.

"Alone?"

"No, Grace Monroe and Mary Dance are here by me."

"Laurent," said Helston, in a low voice—distinctly heard, though, by the two women—"I can't stay with you, or devote myself more to them than to the others; but hold their lives as a sacred charge, and save them, even at the expense of your own. Where is Mary Dance?"

"Here," said a voice from out of the darkness.

"Mary," said Helston, taking her hand, "Heaven bless and preserve you. If I have seemed harsh and hard lately, it has been from necessity. We may not meet again. If not, good-bye."

Mary sobbed, as she convulsively pressed his hand.

"Where is Miss Monroe?" he said then.

"I am here, Mr. Helston," said a low, sweet voice.

And in an instant he was at her side.

"Grace," he said, catching her hands in his, "if I could do as I wished, I should stay to protect you; but my duty is to try and save all. I have been harsh and hard, and have lately seemed to resent your coldness; but under the mask there has been the same warm, passionate love for you. If it could have been returned, you would have made me a happy man. If we never meet again, think of me kindly as one who loved you well."

As his words fell upon her ear, uttered in a calm, unimpassioned way, Grace Monroe trembled; and, in spite of the danger that surrounded them, her heart beat fast. She loved him—she knew she loved him, and far more dearly since she had seen his behaviour of late. She felt that she hated herself for the cruel suspicions that she had harboured; and with lips parted, head thrown back, and the

hot tears streaming down her cheeks, she timidly stretched forth her hands towards where he stood to speak to her.

Then she took a step forward, and, had he touched her, she would have thrown herself upon his breast, saying—

"Take me, I am yours."

But her hands touched nothing; and as, from a distance, she heard his firm, authoritative voice giving warning and advice, she uttered a loud wail, and sank weeping upon the ground.

"Don't cry, dear," whispered a soft voice, and Mary Dance's arms were clasped round her. "He is a true man, and he loves you. He is sure to be back."

Hour after hour went by, and the heat became intense—the scene, awful. The mountain vomited forth flame and smoke; showers of volcanic dust half-stifled the group; then a rain of hot cinders fell around them, so that the hill was covered; and then there was a sweeping hot wind, which bore away the darkness, and the whole island was lit up by the wondrous glowing light of the mountain. So scorching had been the blasts, so heated the showers of dust and cinders, that the exposed parts of those who huddled there were blistered; and as they sought around for a place of refuge, they found that the whole face of the island seemed changed by the withering of the verdure. Where glorious groves had stood, lush with broad-leaved palms and far-spreading tree ferns, were now a few sticks; and the island, in parts, seemed to have been swept bare.

Helston was going constantly from one to another, telling them to be of good cheer, for the violence of the eruption betokened but a short duration.

"It will soon be over," he said.

But as he spoke, flame and red-hot cinders were roaring like some mighty blast from the mouth of the crater, and the whole area of heaven glowed like the roof of some awful furnace.

Helston had looked about, and considered whether it would be advisable to change their position; but as far as he could see, every other hill or undulation of the soil was worse off for exposure than the one they occupied. The very streams ran through their beds emitting clouds of steam, by which their courses could be traced. And now came one of the most critical dangers of all; for as they gazed upon the volcano, which seemed to tremble and rock with the throes which convulsed it, the summit split with a hideous convulsion, and from half a dozen rifts as many floods of molten fire came rushing down, destroying all before them, as they flowed on like so many golden rivers; trees and bushes in their way suddenly leaped into flame, which blazed to their summits in a few seconds, and the roar of the fire became deafening.

Helston, after gazing perfectly astounded at the fearful sight with the glow of the vivid streams growing painful to the eyes, now made for where Laurent stood holding Mary Dance's hand; for she had in this time of tribulation given him ample proof of the love she bore him.

"What is to be done, Laurent?" he said. "Shall we make for the ship?"

"No," said Laurent; "there is a valley now on

either side of us, and the lava will, I reckon, sweep round us below the hill, and then flow over the sand where the ship lies."

"Yes," said Helston, quietly; "and she will be destroyed like a scrap of paper. You are quite right, we must stay where we are, and trust in Heaven. Our only hope is in the eruption coming to an end."

He stood gazing at the spectacle, which enchained every trembling woman with its awful grandeur; and though the heat was oppressive, they suffered less than before, for a rushing wind now set in from all parts of the compass towards the roaring furnace in the middle of the island, and, fanning the flame, it rushed eddying up, apparently miles into the glowing skies.

Suddenly Helston's voice was heard to cry, authoritatively—

"Let no one straggle down the side of the hill. All keep close together on the summit. Let there be no panic, either, even if the lava comes right round. It will not rise so high as this."

And the night passed on—such a night of horror as could hardly have before fallen to the lot of mortal. After what seemed to have been an interminable length of time, a sickly, faint light appeared in the east, and morning dawned just as the lava flood touched the foot of the green knoll—the blackened knoll now—and divided into two rivers.

"Where is Deborah Burrows?" exclaimed Helston, suddenly, his voice heard above the roar of the fiery streams. But there was no reply.

"Where is Deborah Burrows?" shouted Helston again.

"Tink, sah, she leff on board," cried a smothered voice; and then the speaker groaned to himself, "Oh, lor! oh, lor! what a wicked ole man dis chile hab been."

Almost before the words were uttered, Helston was running rapidly down towards the shore; and, by the lurid light, a slight, active form was seen in full pursuit, as, with a cry of despair, Grace Monroe leaped from Mary Dance's side, and ran after him.

"Good heavens, they will both perish!" exclaimed Laurent.

And he rose to follow; but a pair of strong arms were wreathed round him, and a broken voice whispered—

"It is madness! Oh, for my sake, stay! Look!"

He looked, as the heat grew almost unbearable, and it was to see Helston reach the sands; and Grace Monroe, her slight form plainly seen in the lurid light, leap over a line of fire, just as, with a roar, the two floods joined again, after embracing the hill, and began to spread.

Laurent groaned, for he was a prisoner like the rest; and then the smoke from the burning trees shut out what followed.

A TOPER stood in front of a type foundry the other day, spelling out the sign as follows—"Type, f-o-u-n, foun, d-r-y, dry, foun' dry. Tha's jes' my condish'n. I'm that sort of a type myself—foun' dry."

The Russian Bear at Home.

DO you know what it is to be lost?
Probably not.

To be standing up to your knees in snow in the midst of a Russian forest; with the tracks made covered in by the falling snow; with great, tall, solemn-looking spruce firs towering up on every side of you, their broad green boughs weighed to the ground with snow; and ghostly tree trunks and ghostly snow—with its dim, weird light—everywhere?

That's how I was situated one afternoon, having been separated from my companions; and as I stood there, in the midst of that vast solitude, knowing that it spread for miles and scores of miles, and that I could not stumble more than three or four through the snow without becoming exhausted, I grew uncomfortable.

It was in Northern Russia, in the district of Perni, and I remember thinking in my trouble of Russian aggression.

"Ah," I said, "they need not try for more land, when they have such miles of savage, uncultivated forests as this."

I was with some Russian friends, and, early that day, we had had an apparently interminable ride over snow, amongst hemlocks and pines, in a curious kind of conveyance, like a rough old post-chaise taken off its wheels and clapped down on sledge-runners, with shafts made for the horse by crossing a couple of pine poles, in the smaller fork of which the first horse was harnessed, while the ends trailed behind, and kept the conveyance from being over-set as it bumped against tree roots and stones hidden by the snow.

We had two horses, driven tandem-fashion by a roughly-bearded, fur-capped and coated driver, who called me *barin* (brother) whenever he spoke to me, and ceased to crack the long whip-thong which he flourished over the backs of his bell-caparisoned and willing steeds.

It was a cold but invigorating and exciting ride, and when my companions proposed that we should halt for a time and take a ramble in the woods, I was delighted. And away we went from the track, leaving the driver to amuse himself with some vodka or corn whiskey; and gun in hand, we had a ramble hoping to get a shot at something or other.

It was all very well as long as we kept together, but when we happened to become separated, and I awoke to the fact that I had shot nothing, that it was getting towards night, that the cold grew more fierce moment by moment, and—

"Hallo! What's that?" I exclaimed.

It was a long, dismal howl in the distance.

"Wolves!" I ejaculated.

And I began to look about for the handiest tree to climb, and to calculate how long I should be able to support life perched astride a branch amongst the thick snow, while a pack of snarling, savage wolves were waiting below to tear me limb from limb.

There it was again, louder than before; and I was on the way to the tree I had selected, when it suddenly struck me that it was a hail.

"Ahoy! hillo-o-o-o!" I shouted.

And the answer came directly, and soon after my three companions emerged from the thickest part of the forest, and I hurried to meet them.

Half an hour after we had kicked off the snow from our boots, were again in our conveyance and flying along the track behind an open sledge, while another followed us behind.

It was quite night as we flew on, over and through the snow wreaths, passing a sledge with one horse, a group of dogs lying in the snow, and a couple of men wielding their axes on the trunk of a great fallen pine.

We swept by them like lightning, the dogs barking and the three drivers giving a whoop and a halloo, as we bumped, bounded, and glided on according to the nature of the path.

Ten minutes later, with the moon sending our long shadows over the snow, we stopped short at a dark, low, wooden building, the door was thrown open, and we strode into a great, bare, comfortless-looking apartment, whose furniture was a huge table, with a bench to match, and a great brick stove and oven which filled one corner of the apartment.

We, the occupants of the three sledges, had hardly dragged off our stiffly frozen fur coats, when the baying of dogs was heard, the sledge we had passed in the forest dashed up, and one man entered preceded by four dogs, while the other remained outside to stable his horse.

Ten minutes later, and the whole party was assembled in the great room, with the peasant who occupied the place—a kind of forest-keeper—waiting upon us, while his wife and child occupied places near the stove.

I said the place was bare and cheerless; but after the door had been opened for the last time, and I had seen the driving snow and then the warm, ruddy glow from the burning stove, I withdrew that epithet, and considered the Russian peasant's cabin comfort itself.

The cold was so intense, however, that we retained our great fur caps, did ample justice to our host's rough fare, and gloried in the scalding hot draughts of amber tea from the singing *samovar*, or tea-urn—draughts that we drank sugarless from glasses and cups, with slices of lemon floating therein.

Beer is good, so is brandy—whiskey—wine, all and several in their proper time and place; but if you wish to taste a divine drink when you are half-frozen, try tea, from a simmering Russian urn.

Our discourse that night was all of hunting, for the three parties had met together on the same mission in pursuit of bear; and we were in high glee with the hopes of sport on the morrow.

So, in good time, a portion of the assembled party mounted a ladder which led to an upper floor, made so open that the heat of the stove came through, and there stretched their limbs; while we below spread our fur cloaks pretty close to the stove, which was refurnished with fuel, and, in spite of many degrees of frost and bitter winds, were soon—like our host, hostess, and little girl and the dogs—fast asleep.

During the evening, I had learned from my companions a little bit about the habits of the great black bear of Russia—the gentleman whose portrait used

to figure so largely upon the pomatum pots—and found that, in summer time, he leads a wandering life, traversing the forests free as the wind, and supporting himself on fruits and the tender, succulent roots he digs from the earth.

At the approach of winter, however, he becomes strictly a flesh-eating beast, and sets to work to prepare himself a snug retreat, in which to pass the bitter months to come.

The cunning of the fox is proverbial; but the bear has his amount of gumption, and sets to work in a very sensible manner. His aim is to find a good large tree that has been blown down, and in that tempestuous region he is not long in finding one to suit him.

Now, as most people may have noticed, when a tree has been blown down, the roots are torn up on one side only—they retain their hold on the other. A large hole is made, the earth is piled up, and the long roots and fibres are very likely clinging at the sides; so that a cavity, protected on three parts, is formed ready for a bear to take possession.

This he does. And finishes his cave?

Oh, no. He does very little, for the snow does the rest, covering all in, and drifting against the sides till a regular snow hut is composed, whose interior is made snug and compact by the bear walking and shuffling round and round.

So far, so good. Bruin has secured himself a chamber in which, with his family, if he has any, he intends to sleep away the winter, wrapped in his own fat—or, as we should say, grease, as it is always sheep's tallow and bears' grease—and his shaggy black fur.

For the bear is dormouse-like in his habits, and spends a great deal of the cold, wintry time in sleep. But, to sleep, one must be comfortable, even if one is a bear; and a bed of snow is, to say the least of it, if white and clean, far from warm as a blanket. So, to make matters more satisfactory, the bear sets out to collect moss, which he does from the neighbouring trees, tearing and scraping it down with his great paws, huddling it up into a truss against his chest, and then, going on his hind legs like a great black savage, he carries it off to his new den to make a bed.

He carries this on till he has well filled his hole, and then, plunging into the middle of the snug, warm mass, he snuggles it about him, settles himself comfortably with his shaggy, black bearskin around him, and goes off to sleep for a month; while the soft, white, feathery snow comes down, and fills up his footprints, and lightly covers over the hole by which Bruin has gone in and out, so that he lies there snug and well concealed—safe, it may be said, from the hunters.

Not at all safe, for the Russian forest guides know how to track the sleeping bear, as I soon found.

We started in good time the next morning, a party of ten strong, well furred and booted; we townsmen being armed with double rifles, revolvers, and hunting knives, and the peasants and forest guides, of whom there were four, bearing one old-fashioned gun amongst them, with a tremendous bore; but each man had a formidable, keen-edged axe in his girdle, and two of them carried sharp-

pointed hunting spears, broad-bladed like a sword, and with a cross-piece of steel to prevent passing so far into the body of a bear that it could not be withdrawn.

We were in the highest of spirits; for there was no fear of frightening away the game as in autumn, when the bear is hunted by the track, and following his footprints over the thin crust of half-frozen snow which covers the earth. He is then cautious, and the crackling of ice or the breaking of a twig may send him scuffling away into the greater depths of the forest.

Then, too, his track is hard to follow, being crossed and recrossed and returning on itself so frequently, that the hunter grows confounded, and ends by giving up in despair.

But it was not so now; we had certain grounds to go upon, and the guide assured me and my friends that there were bears in the neighbourhood.

"But how do you know?" I asked.

"Well, your greatness," the man said, "we always know at the beginning of winter by the remains of the game the bear has killed and devoured. There are gnawed bones lying about in all directions, for he feeds himself up fat, and then goes to sleep."

"Good," I replied.

And then, turning to my friend, I said—

"It's all very well; but I don't see how anything is to be found under this wilderness of snow."

"Wait a little," he said, smiling.

So we walked on through the snow, and under the drooping branches of the sombre pines, which were literally laden with the beautiful white crystals.

At last, one of the *gardes* stopped short, and ran heavily towards a tree, which he paused to examine; and then went to another and another before beckoning to me.

"There, *barin*," he said, showing his great white teeth, "there are the bear signs. What do you say now?"

"Nothing, only that I see no bear signs," I replied.

"He sees no bear signs," said the man, apostrophising the snow. "Look, *barin*, at that tree, and that, and that."

He pointed to several old forest monarchs in quick succession, but I saw nothing particular but patches of snow on the stumps of the broken branches.

I shook my head; and then he took my arm, and led me to one of the trees.

"Look, *barin*," he said, "the bear has been here to scrape off moss to make his bed, and he has torn off armfuls. See, he has reached up to there—nearly six feet and a-half. He is a monster, and is close by."

"But are you sure?" I said.

"Sure, *barin*? Look. He has been at that tree, too; just the same height. He is a big bear, and close by. Now to find his hole."

He and his fellows set to work at once, while I turned to my companions, both Russians, who smiled at my puzzled expression of countenance.

"The *garde* is quite right," said one. "These men can tell almost to an inch the size of a bear by the

height to which he tears the moss from a tree, and I expect this time we have got a monster to deal with. If you feel alarmed, you can get up a tree."

"Whether I feel alarmed or no, I shall not get up a tree without you do," I said; and I examined the cartridges in my double breech-loader and revolver. "I mean fighting, for this is my first bear—if we find one."

"You'll find one, never fear," said my companion, following my example as to his firearms.

And at that moment there was a loud hallo from amongst the trees to our left.

"Found!" cried my companion.

And we all dashed off towards the spot from whence the sound came.

"Shan't we frighten it away?" I panted.

"Oh, no," cried my friend. "On the contrary, we shall have a job to get the monster to show himself."

On reaching the spot, we found it was where three huge fir trees had fallen, crashing down during some forest storm; and these, lying one over the other, and then covered by the drifting snow, had made what the *garde* declared to be a splendid shelter for the bear.

As far as I was concerned, I could see nothing but a mound of snow, which formed a series of pitfalls, into which member after member of the party crashed. For the snow lay lightly over the branches, making all look smooth, till the foot was placed thereon, when one went up to the shoulders, perhaps, in dead wood.

"Where is his entry, Ivan?" said my companion.

"There, highness," said the *garde*, pointing to a depression; but I saw nothing but snow.

"Good, then! Now, gentlemen," said my friend, "form a half-circle here, and be ready to fire. Take care not to wound your friends, and, above all, stand firm, and give the monster every bullet you can—for mind, it is no child's play. Of course, we shall all stand by one another."

"Yes, yes," was chorused.

And, not without feeling a palpitation of the heart, I took my place, which was a front one, in honour of my being an Englishman and a visitor.

The others were well arranged. In fact, to avoid failure, and the escape of the bear by an unexpected hole, we were posted on three sides of the fallen trees; and at last, all being ready, one of the *gardes*, armed with his long hunting spear, began to mount the hill of snow.

Every man had his finger upon the trigger, prepared for the bear's rush; but that was not to be yet, for the *garde* had to climb slowly and cautiously, feeling his way with his hunting spear, lest he should go through with a crash, and suddenly find himself unannounced in the presence of the bear in the depths and darkness of his hole.

It was an anxious time, and we waited, with no small excitement, till the *garde*, in a quiet, lumbering way, and after many slips, had reached the top, where he stood up to his middle in snow.

"I'm striding over him," he said, coolly, with a foot on each of the two biggest trees. "He's beginning to move, so when you're ready I'll start him."

"Ready," said my friend; and I saw the *garde*

gently put down his spear, feeling with it amongst the twigs and snow, till he had forced it down six feet, when he gave it a fierce thrust.

There was a growl like thunder, and I saw the staff of the spear jerked.

No doubt about a bear, I thought; and I had no sooner thought so, than there was another roar, and Bruin, so rudely awakened from his winter sleep, dashed off his white bedclothes, cast aside the curtains, and made his appearance—black, red-eyed, white-teethed; and snarling savagely.

Bang!—bang!—bang!—bang! went our pieces, and the bullets told upon his carcase; but in place of charging us, he no sooner received his warm reception than he dashed back, and made a charge out through the snow on the other side.

Here he was received by another volley, which did not stop him, however; for he rose up, darted upon one of our party, struck him down, tearing his face horribly; and then, streaming with blood, stood over him, growling defiantly.

One of the *gardes* made a chop at him on the haunch; our friend from the top leaped at him, but went up to his neck in the snow and twigs, from which he was unable to extricate himself; while another picked up the leader's long spear, tried to get by, but failed; while I, with two companions, were quite left in the background, trying to struggle over the heap to where the conflict was going savagely on.

For the bear, having struck down one of his foes, was now savagely at bay, responding with short rushes to the fierce thrusts given him by one of the peasants with his hunting spear.

Just as I was about to make a bound over the snow, to reach those in front, I saw my friend in front draw his revolver, and fire it at close quarters right into the bear's shoulder.

The monster gave a howl of rage, and dashed right forward at the *garde*, striking aside his hunting spear as if it had been a blade of grass, and then, rising up, with one stroke of his paw he sent the poor fellow flying, his arm broken by the force of the blow.

The next moment I was on the scene, ready to fire; but the bear had made good his retreat back into his den.

This gave us time to help our two wounded men into a place of safety, when a council of war was held as to our next proceedings.

The bear was, of course, terribly dangerous now, but we all mentally signed his death-warrant; and, sending the *garde* on to the top once more, he drove his spear down with such vigorous digs that at the second there was a terrible roar, and the bear rushed out again.

I got a good aim at him this time, and fired twice, sending each ball home.

Before I could take my rifle from my shoulder, I found myself on my back, with the bear standing over me.

It was not a pleasant position, and my heart seemed to stand still.

But the next moment two hunting spears were driven into him to the cross-pieces, and my friends sent bullet after bullet crashing into him till he sub-

sided—sinking down and rolling over across me dead, and forcing me right down into the snow.

"Quick!" I heard my friend exclaim, "or he'll be smothered. Are you much hurt?" he cried, as the bear was dragged off me, and I struggled to my feet.

"I only feel as if some one had thrown a haystack at me," I panted, shaking myself, and feeling myself all over.

"Not clawed?"

"Not a claw," I said, thankfully. "He hit me in the chest with his head, and sent me flying, that's all; but he was awfully heavy."

Heavy, indeed, for he was a huge black monster—massive, thick, and fat to a degree.

But our task was not done, for the chief *garde* announced, on entering the den, the presence of a cub, which was of such a size that, when it rushed out, two of the men leaped upon its back, and were carried by it for some distance, amidst the laughter of all present, before they were able to bind it and reduce it to subjection.

Meanwhile two of the party had, directly after the fall of the bear, run off by the shortest route to the lodge; and, at the end of a couple of hours, we heard the cracking of whips, and a couple of sledges arrived—one for the wounded men, who bore their clawings with the greatest of fortitude, and, in reply to my pitying remarks, said they were used to them; the other for the monstrous bear, with which we returned in triumph.

The *gardes*, by the way, told me that the smaller bear was what they called the schoolmaster, and was one of a previous litter kept by the old bear in the den to teach the little ones, to play with them, and to show them their first lessons in striking down prey.

Be this as it may, during my month's hunting sojourn in Northern Russia, I found this bear cub full of antics, and always ready to play and gambol with the murderers of his papa—a fact which shows a very low type of morality.

As for the injured men, they soon recovered, one very ready to take part in my second visit to the Russian bear at home.

Among the Icebergs.

CHAPTER XV.

NEARER, nearer, and with the huge summit inclining more and more towards us. But a minute before, and we were sailing slowly; but the coming of this great berg seemed to leave us quite in shelter, with the sails flapping and the vessel rolling slowly from side to side.

There was no escape, and, with a hand seeming to constrain my breathing, I muttered poor Mark's name, finding time though, even then, to wonder whether this had been his fate, whether his brave ship had been crushed into splinters by one of these bergs, leaving only a few fragments of wave-tossed wood to tell the tale when cast up on some distant shore.

Nearer and nearer now, bowing, as it were, over to us; pieces falling from the sides into the sea, with a turmoil that made the stoutest-hearted blench; for

the solemn slowness of the coming peril seemed to add intense terror. There was nothing to be done. Men could only wait and watch; and more than one stood by the bulwarks, ready to leap overboard when the vast mass fell, sooner than stay to be crushed down with the ship.

We women wanted no telling of the danger—it was written plainly enough upon every face; but, had I been in doubt, all hope would have been swept away by old Brunyee, who came quietly up to my side, to whisper, in his rough, hoarse way—

“Have you said your prayers, miss? Because if you aint, say ‘em, an’ be short too. Good-bye.”

He was gone the next moment, and my eyes rested upon Stephen Ellerby, in dread lest he should seek my side; but no, he was standing in the bows of the vessel, in a strange, half-crouching fashion, his teeth set, his eyes straining, and his hands contracted, watching intently the coming end, and thinking evidently of nothing but our impending peril.

Another few seconds, and our fate must have been sealed, when, with a noise like thunder—sharp, close, and distinct—the huge berg split, a vast mass falling into the water between the main ice and the *Ice Blink*, forcing the water over us in a wave of foam that swept the deck, and making the little vessel careen, and rise and fall in the eddying, boiling water, which seemed to draw us nearer and nearer to the berg, till, crashing amongst the fragments, we ran up against the iceberg heavily twice. But the great peril was at an end—the fall of the huge fragment had caused the berg to settle slowly back, when, urged by the reaction, the ship swung clear, the breeze touched her sails once more, and as they filled, and the vessel bent to their influence, and then seemed to give a leap forward, the men gave a loud, wild cheer; for we had in that last brief space stepped, as it were, from death unto life.

CHAPTER XVI.

ANOTHER day, and another, and still no progress in any direction; that which we gained in one hour was lost the next. It was one constant battle with the ice, which hemmed us in and bore us back towards the mysterious regions around the Pole.

Had every sheet and field and floe been a slave to do my will, it could not have been better performed; and at last, completely surrounded by field after field, impenetrable, and stretching as far as the eye could reach from the masthead, there we lay, in a little lake at the foot of a vast cliff, down whose sides glaciers had poured their semi-solid currents, while the sides of our little harbour were steep and precipitous.

I learned from Brunyee that it was the most perilous voyage he had ever witnessed; and as I mused and wondered whether poor Mark and his men of the *Dawn* had been exposed to such dangers, the old boatswain ended by saying that the next wind would either make an opening and set us free to navigate more peril-laden seas, or else close the ice round us, and fix us for our winter quarters.

“And I hope the last, miss; for there’s no good to be got by running the ship’s nose in amongst the

broken ice. I said from the first, I said, that we could not get out of it, and I say so now. We might get on a few miles, but we should only be in a worse fix than we are now. There aint no getting out of it. And now here comes the breeze. Ay, dead ashore. There you are, then; it’s a closer up, miss, and no getting away now. If it had been off the shore, the ice might have opened. All I’ve got to say now is, may we have easy quarters, and no nip.”

I did not know what he meant then by nip. I found it out, though, the next morning, when, after a bitter night, I went on deck, to find it half covered with snow, and the ice closed up all round. There was a strange, dull roar, making the air seem to quiver and vibrate; and, as I gazed around, the changing forms of the ice piled up here and there told of the mighty crush that was going on as this mysterious power of nature was forcing millions of tons of solidified water into contact, while now the anxious aspect of the captain’s face told me that a great crisis was at hand.

I was secretly rejoicing at our hindrance, and I could not—I dare not—go near to him or Mr. Solly, for it was on my account that these risks were being run; but I anxiously watched the preparations made with anchors placed out upon the ice on either side, with cables stretching to the capstan on the deck.

The explanation of these preparations soon was vouchsafed to me, for I was now startled by a strange, grating, crunching noise beneath my feet, and involuntarily catching at and holding by the bulwark, I felt that the vessel was being crushed between the sides of the ice, which had closed upon her; but, as the pressure continued, she gave jump after jump, forced up, as it were, by the sides, and leaning over so that but for the men hauling up on one of the cables, the ship would have lain right down.

Directly after, though, there was another heave of the ice, and the ship was nearly righted again, being forced higher and higher, till it stood right up, quite ten feet above the rough ice, cradled as it were amongst a heap of rough fragments, where it stayed; although, moment by moment, I expected to feel it glide down again, to lie a helpless wreck upon the ice.

But no, it was a fixture; and as far as we could tell, it was likely so to stay, for the wind still continued bringing field after field of ice, to act as buttresses against our position, while the thermometer had now sunk low enough to cause fresh ice to form rapidly upon the smooth water.

“There, my dear,” said Captain Pash, coming up to me, “if you wanted us to stop for the winter, and have a good search, there you have it. I thought it was my duty to try to the last moment to get free; but as we haven’t, why we must make the best of it, for these are our winter quarters, and there’ll be no stirring now till next summer, so you need not think it.”

“Why may there not come a fresh storm, and break up this ice again?” said a voice.

And I started to find that Stephen Ellerby had been listening.

“Why, Master Stephen? why, because there won’t. You’ll have storms enough, and strong enough ones

too, cold enough to cut the life out of a man; but none to cut this ice up. No, we're in for winter quarters; and I'm going to get down the top gear and the running rigging, and to make all snug, I can tell you."

For the first time for many days, Stephen Ellerby and I looked each other full in the face, and I read there the bitter disappointment he felt; for I could see that this was a change in the state of affairs upon which he had not counted; and it may have been petty, but all the same, there was a mingled feeling of joy in my heart, partly arising from pleasure at his disappointment, partly from the knowledge that something might yet be done.

I was for proceeding at once; but, saving a few short excursions over the ice, there was nothing done in consequence of the busy preparations to meet the coming time of peril; and as I could do nothing without the captain's help, I was compelled to wait patiently. Not that it was an idle time for either Ann or myself, for there were furs to cut up and make into winter clothing, with mitts and masks; preparations that I felt, at first, almost disposed to smile at, in my ignorance of the mighty power of the enemy that would stalk around us in the darkness of the long Arctic night.

At length, though, the vessel was regularly built in—the deck being covered with planking and canvas—steps were cut in the ice, and stoves arranged to supply extra warmth; when Captain Pash turned his attention to the manufacture of a couple of sledges, such as would bear provisions and be easily dragged by the men over the frozen snow.

The carpenter and one of the men were busy over this; and now, seeing that he must submit to circumstances, Stephen Ellerby joined in every preparation with the greatest eagerness, helping apparently to the best of his power; and matters were progressing rapidly for the first long excursion we were to make, when we had our first visit from the Esquimaux, who came galloping up with their dogs, tethered them hastily to pegs driven in the ice, and then, without evincing the slightest fear, came chattering up to the ship's side, begging, I suppose, for iron; though at the time we were quite unable to understand a word of their tongue.

I was rather startled by two of them, who came up to where I was standing with Ann and Mrs. Pash, till I heard from one of the sailors that they were both women.

The curiosity they evinced would at another time have been amusing; but now my intercourse with them was most painful, as I tried to question them by signs, asking them for an answer to that which I had come into these desolate regions to learn—Where were the crew of the *Northern Dawn*?

Poor things, they could not comprehend me, though I tried all I could to explain that which I wanted to know; till, worn out with vexation and despair, the weak tears streamed down my cheeks.

For what was more likely than that they in their wanderings had come across those of whom we were in search?

One of the poor women watched me with an interest that seemed to rivet her to the spot for awhile; and then, as if seized by some sudden whim, she

darted off to a sledge, seized a whip, and the next minute was tearing off as hard as the dogs could gallop over the rugged ice.

A couple of hours elapsed, during which time, by means of signs, Captain Pash contrived to obtain from the Esquimaux one of their sledges and half a dozen dogs, which they gave up in exchange for hatchets, coils of line, and a knife or two; and they seemed then about to depart, when an exclamation from one of the party drew attention to a coming sledge, and soon after the woman who had left us came tearing up, and we learned the meaning of her hurried flight.

As she left the sledge, it was to bring with her a bundle, which she brought carefully up to us, to open and display an unfortunate little baby, evidently in a dying state, and this she offered to each of us in turn.

"What does the woman want?" exclaimed Mrs. Pash.

"I know—I know!" I exclaimed; for, like a flash of light, the woman's meaning seemed to dawn upon me. "The little thing is ill, and she wants us to cure it. Pray do something."

"Oh, that's it, is it?" said the captain's wife, good humouredly; and, as I took the poor little light bundle, she examined it, saw with motherly eyes what ailed the little thing, and then, making signs to the woman to follow, we all went down to the cabin, where the medicine chest furnished the necessary remedy; and, after it was administered, the woman went away, apparently delighted beyond measure.

The next morning we found her waiting, as soon as we went outside the ship for a walk on the ice, ready to indulge in an extravagant display of joy, as she held up the bundle of furs to show how much the little one had improved. She had brought with her a couple of rude ornaments, made of ivory, and these she forced upon Mrs. Pash and me; but that was not the only return she was to make us, for, by the little homely compassion displayed to a savage, we had made a friend who was to do us vital service in the days to come, when, worn out with cold and hunger, despair was beginning to have a hold upon us, and we began to think that we had gazed upon England's shores for the last time.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE days were fast drawing in; and in spite of the determination with which I pressed Captain Pash to hurry forward, the nights were growing terribly long and cold, before the first expedition of search, which was to be made around the shores of the great bay where we were frozen in, could be started.

I had insisted upon being one of the party, and of course Ann Brent had determined to go as well; and one morning, as soon as it was light, we set off, the dogs drawing the provision-laden sledge, and the men another, containing a tent and pole.

But I had miscalculated my strength, and before we had gone many miles I found, from the painful way in which I walked, and from the oppression at my chest, that I must give up; and I was about to speak when Ann, who had watched me attentively

from the first, called upon Captain Pash to stop, and the next moment he and Stephen Ellerby were at my side.

How I blamed my weak nature, and how it cut me to feel that I was to be the means of arresting the expedition! But I would not give in to the party going back with me, though Stephen Ellerby would have insisted; and when I found them bent upon it, I declared that sooner than they should go back with me I would go forward.

"Pray, be reasonable," Stephen whispered to me. "Let us see you back in safety, and then we will take up the search again."

I gazed at him fixedly, feeling full of doubt the while, and then declined.

"No," I said, "go forward with the party—one of the men can see us back in safety. Let Brunyee come."

Captain Pash would have taken Stephen Ellerby's side this time, but I pleaded to him so pitifully that he at last gave way.

"I wouldn't have cared," he said, "if old Solly was here to see you back safely."

For Mr. Solly was on board in charge of the vessel.

"But Brunyee will be quite sufficient," I urged; "pray go on, and do not waste precious time. I can walk it, I am sure, and we can take our time."

"Well," said Captain Pash, "it is fine and bright; and I don't see that you can come to harm if Brunyee can keep to the back track."

"Humph! a child might do that," said the old sailor, contemptuously.

And then, to prevent further objections, I started back over the ice, with Brunyee and Ann close behind.

I glanced once over my shoulder to see that they were watching me, and this made me step out the more boldly; till, telling Ann to look back once more, she told me that they had continued the journey.

It was a bitter walk back over the rugged ice, for I was in pain, mental and bodily. I was tormented by doubts, feeling sure that, in spite of Stephen Ellerby's eager offers of assistance, he would rather bar than help forward the journey. Then I told myself that it was cruel and uncharitable; for, whatever his faults, he would not have the inhumanity to leave a fellow-creature to perish, even though that fellow-creature was his rival. Another moment, and I was upbraiding myself for taking his part, and accusing myself of weakness and leaning towards him.

Then once more came pain and fatigue, to remind me that I was performing a journey that was taxing my energies to the greatest extreme.

We had walked on for about an hour, winding about to avoid the heaviest pieces of ice, Brunyee always in front to pick out the smoothest road, when the old man looked back, and he must have seen my distress, for he immediately called out—

"Halt!"

"Indeed, you need not stay for me," I urged; for the will was in me to toil on to the end.

"Mustn't be cruel to animals," he said, gruffly. "I'm nearly done up, and we must have something

to eat, and a bit o' 'bacco, before we go another step."

He saw that I could read his thoughts, but he would not take any notice; and spreading a fur upon the ice, in a spot where the sun's rays fell strongly, he drew from his wallet some biscuit and preserved meat, insisting that we should both eat before we went on again.

We obeyed him in silence, for the rest and refreshment were both most necessary; and at the end of an hour we rose to continue our journey, when, to my great sorrow, I found that I was so lame that I could hardly get along.

How I struggled to hide my sufferings; for, to add to our trouble, the brief day was at an end, the wind had risen, and with the darkness came clouds and falling snow.

For a while we struggled on, when, seeing how laboured was our progress, Brunyee insisted upon our each taking an arm, when he toiled along with us for another hour, our heads down to avoid the fierce cutting blast, and the snow which drifted along, so that we were blinded; and at last came the announcement from Brunyee that he had lost his way, and that we must take shelter in a snow drift until the storm was over.

There was no help for it, and as soon as he had trampled down the snow, and spread the great fur wrapper he carried, tent fashion, above our heads, it grew heavy with the drift; and as we listened to the savage howling of the storm, it gradually grew fainter and sounded more distant; but when I asked if it was nearly over, it was only to learn that it was as fierce as ever, only that we were buried in the drift, and the snow muffled the sound each moment more and more.

The cold outside had been intense, but here the heat soon grew oppressive. I was too weary to notice it, though; and soon after, with Ann's arms tightly round me, and my head resting where I could hear the beating of her brave, true heart, I fell into the deep sleep engendered by weariness, and was soon wandering far away in troubled dreams—now helping to save poor Mark from the crushing icebergs, which thundered and ground together; now striving hard to shriek and warn him against Stephen Ellerby, who was about to dash him down from one of the highest cliffs. Then I knew that I had come too late, and I saw him fall, helpless and bleeding, upon the glistening ice.

Dream after dream—wild, vague visions all pointing to coming trouble; but still I slept on in the snowy cavern hour after hour, the tempest howling and raging without in such a way that, to have ventured out, would have been certain death.

At last I awoke in that wild, troubled state that follows upon some fearful dream. Where was I? I could not tell; and in my dread it was some little time before I could realize my position and make out that I was, to all intents and purposes, buried alive in the snow.

But, as I realized the fact that Ann was breathing peacefully by my side, I became more assured, and waited anxiously for the time when we could continue our journey.

I soon knew, though, how impossible it was; for

then, in a deep roar, I could hear still the rushing noise of the storm as it swept by, and I wondered how it fared with those who, at my bidding, were battling with it miles away.

Then I grew more reconciled; for I recalled how that they had a low tent, and plenty of accessories for bidding defiance to the storm. They had experience, too, to protect them; and, while pondering upon all this, I once more fell asleep, and dreamed of quiet country sunshine, and hope and love.

Then a change came over my dream once more, and I was in trouble, seeing once more the appealing face of poor Mark Grant, and his outstretched hands, while I seemed to hear his voice accusing me of weakness and cowardice for not coming to his help, but sending another; when the future of it all floated before me, and I saw Mark and Stephen Ellerby striving together upon the ice, nearer and nearer to some awful chasm that was gaping to receive them; Mark being beaten back step by step, till he was hanging completely over, and then, with a start, I awoke, to find the heat was oppressive, almost stifling, for the fur covering was pressed down upon us by the weight of the snow.

A few reassuring words from Ann, though, served to dispel the troubled fancies; and with a shudder, as I recalled the past, I sat there in the darkness waiting for the end of the storm, whose deep muffled roar still surged above our heads.

Doing the Horrid.

"IT'S of no use, not a bit. I get the best dramas I can, I engage the best actors at liberal salaries, I give the best scenery, and am lavish in expenditure over dresses; and what is the result? The public will not come, and I cannot pay my expenses. The market is overstocked; and, no matter what may be said to the contrary, it is only here and there, by a kind of chance-luck, such as makes some miserable drivel a popular comic song for the time, that a piece succeeds."

This is the opinion of a theatrical manager disgusted by his ill-success. But it is wonderfully true; for, setting aside exceptions, it is hard work to fill a theatre unless extraordinary means are adopted.

We are so particular and just a people, that we look with horror on the doings of the Romans in their amphitheatres, and we are terribly shocked when we hear it intimated as probable that the Prince of Wales will be present at a bull fight; while at home we go in crowds to see Blondin walk a tight-rope eighty feet from the ground.

This is risky—there is the chance that he may fall, to be lifted up a shapeless mass from the gravel beneath; but if the same artist performs on the low rope, six or eight feet from the ground, a series of graceful tricks that are really wonderful pieces of skill and agility, we stay away.

Blondin knows this, and plans to gratify his crowds by pretending to slip, by walking blindfolded in a sack, by mounting a grooved bicycle, and in other ways making his performance thrill the nerves and

curdle the blood of his spectators, and—nets large sums of money.

It is this love of seeing the dangerous that attracts to a balloon ascent, to see a girl shot up into a netting, to witness a terribly risky trapeze business; and never was this more strongly catered for than when, about the year 1852, a couple of trapezists used to go up from Cremorne swinging beneath the car of a balloon, and continuing their awfully hazardous performance till, apparently no bigger than one's finger, they were seen to climb up the invisible rope, and gain the car.

There has been rather a cessation of dangerous performances of late, but they have been revived in the sensation drama now running at the Olympic Theatre.

The piece is called "Si Slocum," and the principal performers therein—the Frayne Family—are dubbed the "Kentucky Rifle Team," whose feats are described as follows:—

"During the play, Mr. Frayne will shoot an apple from his wife's head backward, placing the gun over his left shoulder, and taking sight from the reflection of a six-inch mirror, his back towards the mark.

"Mrs. Frank I. Frayne will shoot an apple from her husband's hand, making strictly an off-hand shot, a feat attempted by no other lady in the world.

"Master Frankie, five years of age, will make a shot, placed at random by his father, off-hand, a feat attempted by no other child of his years."

This, of course, sets the reader thinking of William Tell, shooting the apple from his son's head with a bolt from his cross-bow; and whether William Tell did or not, history is answerable for the story.

Here, however, in London, we have no need to take history's word for the truth of the announcement; for, not armed with crossbows, but with rifles, the Fraynes do really perform some wonderful feats.

The fact is simple. Mr. Frayne rushes on to the stage in an exciting scene, wherein an unfortunate negro has been hung up by the hands, and, raising his rifle, the American trapper takes aim at the supposed rope by which the black is hanging, fires, and with the bullet cuts the rope, and sets the black free.

Only in this case the marksman goes very close to the supposed rope, and this latter is not rope at all, but a piece of light wood, which shatters on being touched by the bullet. All the same, though, it is a good shot.

The next feat—and they are all made to do duty as incidents in the drama—is performed by the little boy, a clever, bright little fellow, who fires at a teapot placed in a tree, and shatters it to atoms. Also a very clever shot for so young a child.

Soon after, as the scene is laid in the far west, and they are surrounded by enemies, the husband calls upon his wife to see if she has lost her old skill with the rifle, and taking an apple, he bites out a piece, so as to make it look white.

"Now," he says to her, in these or similar words, "imagine that your boy is in danger, and that his safety depended upon the steadiness of your aim. Think that this is the white of your enemy's eye."

As he speaks, he stands on one side of the stage,

and holds up the apple at arm's length, between the two first fingers and thumb of his left hand, while his wife, on the other side of the stage, takes aim, fires, and the apple is shattered to atoms.

"A trick!" some one exclaims; but it is not—nothing but fair, skilful marksmanship, entirely depending upon the steadiness of Mrs. Frayne's aim.

The most important feat is reserved for the last, when, taken prisoner at his ranch, the trapper is offered his liberty if he will, like William Tell, shoot an apple, not from his son's, but from his wife's head—and not in the ordinary way, but backwards.

He at last accepts, and his wife is placed in nearly the position he occupied but a short time before. Here, ostensibly that he may not be dazzled by her look, the husband throws a large plaid shawl over his wife's head; then, placing upon it an apple, he loads his rifle in the presence of the spectators, placing in the powder and bullet, which he first drops heavily upon the stage.

There is no deceit here; the movement of the tightly fitting bullet, as the ramrod is applied, is perfectly apparent; and then all seems ready for the shot.

But it must be remembered that the marksman was to fire over his shoulder backwards, as he takes aim at the apple upon his wife's head.

This, of course, would be nearly an impossibility without some artificial adjuncts. So Mr. Frayne hangs a small shaving glass on the wing at the side, turns his back to his mark, rests his rifle barrel on his shoulder—nearest the audience—places his rifle butt against the wall, and then takes his aim *by looking in the glass*, in which the image of the apple is of course reflected.

Then, after a long aim, the trigger is drawn, there is the report, and simultaneously the apple on Mrs. Frayne's head is shattered to atoms, the writer having an ocular demonstration of the truth of the break-up of the apple, for several good-sized fragments flew into the body of the house, and one piece was driven into the bosom of the writer's shirt.

The husband then rushes across the stage and clasps his wife in his arms, at the same time tearing from her the enveloping shawl; and though it has been said that a dummy is placed in the lady's place, this we can unhesitatingly contradict, for the lady never moves till after the shot is fired. She bears the apple, and by a marvellously accurate shot it is struck from her head.

But the risk—the consequences of the bullet being struck an inch too low, what of them?

Well, that is the performers' secret, and it would be unjust to deprive them of the praise that accrues from their ingenuity. That the lady is protected, and that a miss would not result in harm to her, is patent to a close observer; otherwise, no marksman or manager dares to place such an exhibition upon the stage.

In fact, without being egotistical, the writer declares that he has solved the mystery, and the patrons of the theatre who go there in a morbid search for sensation may rest assured that they will not be present any night when the lady is carried out bleeding, or with her brains bespattered on the side-wings of the house.

As for the gentleman, one would not give much

for the security of his fingers, or the palm of his hand, if the lady's aim deviated ever so slightly from the right line, for he is apparently wholly unprotected, and nightly risks mutilation for the purpose of making an income.

Every seat is of course regularly taken; and white ties and jaded faces are to be seen in abundance in stalls and private boxes; for this is the last excitement, don't you know, and those who neglect sterling dramas must be present to witness the risks in a piece of which it would be hard work to say even a word in praise.

The Egotist's Note-book.

OUR streets are never so clean that they will not bear improvement. Here is a proposal:—"The present system of scavenging the streets of London appears to consist in sweeping up the mud, and letting it gradually be redistributed. A very small per centage is removed by the sturdy and deliberate, but reckless scavenger, who whirls the liquid filth aloft from his scoop with a grand action, which permits it to splash whom it listeth. Temporary wells would surely be a great improvement. A receptacle with a narrow orifice beneath the curb, and widening towards the bottom, would hold the filth until an efficient service of carts—into which it could be pumped—removed it bodily. Why cannot this plan, which is unattended by any mechanical difficulty, be given at least a fair trial?"

It is said that in a few days a novel kind of Hansom will be placed upon the cab-stands. It will not, however, differ from the present form of that vehicle; but the body will be turned round, so that the passenger will ride with his back towards the horse and its driver. In this way passengers will be protected from the wind and driving rain, as well as other inconveniences. To those who dislike riding with their backs to the horses, the new cab may feel awkward; but railway practice has accustomed most people to that, and the only other objection that at present suggests itself is that a dishonest customer might step out and defraud cabby of his lawful fare. Cabs similar in construction were in use some five-and-thirty or forty years ago. But can't we have an improved cabby?

Now that winter has come, and ladies are looking forward to many a pleasant evening spent in the enjoyment of the dance, they often forget the attendant fatigue, until the exhaustion of the following day reminds them that every pleasure has its alloy. This fatigue is in great measure produced by the tight ligature or garter with which the stockings are fastened, hindering the free circulation of the blood. Medical men are unanimous in declaring the use of garters to be a most fruitful source of disease. Every lady desiring health and comfort should at once provide herself with a pair of the new patent stocking suspenders, made by Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London. The price is only 3s. per pair, of any draper, or post free for two extra stamps.

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Three Hundred Virgins.

A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS.

CHAPTER XXI.—IN PRISON.

FOR the first few hours of her imprisonment, Deborah did nothing but pace up and down her narrow cabin. Her face was distorted by passion, and at such times she threw herself frantically against the door, or strove to escape by the window; but only to calm down again, and seat herself, with her head resting against the bulkhead, when a smile would come upon her face, robbing it of most of its hardness, as she thought of Helston.

For, at such times, she dwelt not upon his rejection of her advances, but upon the time when, angry and determined, he had completely turned the tables, and taken possession of the ship.

With all her desire for the mastery, she could not help admiring the stern, brave man who had so completely set her and her plans at naught, and by energetic action and a few words brought all the women back to their proper position.

At times she stormed against him, and mentally determined that, could she escape, she would again hold the sway; but the softer fits would regain possession of her soul, and then she would tell herself that he was still her master, in spite of all, and that a word from him would make her his slave for life.

Then, as time wore on, she strove to win over to her side those who came to her with her daily allowance of provisions, but in vain. Those who were chosen as messengers were too much devoted to Helston; and at last she was sinking into a quiet, apathetic state, when one day 'Thello made his appearance with her dinner.

She started as she saw the black's grinning white teeth, and remembering his old banter, her soul was in arms, and she stood upon her defence.

"I hope you find yourself tickler well, Ma'am Burrows," said 'Thello. "I ask mass' Helston leab, and he say I may, so I bring you lubbly little dish of savoury of my own composing, and hope we be better friends for de future. Lor-a-mussy! Oh, dear! Here—help—murder!"

'Thello rushed out of the cabin in a state of wild excitement, with his savoury dish flying after him; for hardly had he made known the object of his mission than Deborah, in a fit of passion, seized a plate, and smashed it over the sable curls of the cook, who turned and fled, while the moment the dish had flown out after him, the door was clapped to and fastened.

"Lor-a-mussy, see what dat great big bull-alligator woman hab done," cried 'Thello, as soon as he found that he was safe.

There was a chorus of laughter from the women on the deck.

"Yes, you laugh, you lubbly creatures," cried 'Thello; "but you no laugh if you dinner serb like dat ah. It worse than frow de tater at de head ob de cook. Dat woman mad as hatter."

Helston frowned as soon as he heard of the incident, and gave Mary Dance orders that no further advances were to be made to the obstinate woman; but the next day, taking into consideration that

Deborah had been a prisoner for three months, he made up his mind to go and see her himself, and try if he could not bring her to reason.

So, taking half-a-dozen of the principal women into his confidence, he sent word by Mary Dance that he was coming to see her, and about an hour after had himself admitted into the cabin, which now went by the name of the prison.

Deborah met him on the threshold, and, to his surprise, motioned him to the one chair in the room—which, however, he refused to take; and she on her part declining, they remained standing during the interview.

"I have come, Deborah," Helston began, "to see if you are willing to listen to reason."

"I don't understand you," she replied, coldly.

"Well, then I will put it in another form," he said. "I have several times made advances to you concerning peace."

"And I have declined to listen to them," said Deborah.

"Yes," continued Helston; "and now, feeling unwilling that you should remain a prisoner longer—"

"Yes, a prisoner," she exclaimed, bitterly.

"—I have come to ask you whether you are disposed to take your place once more amongst the women. For my part, if you promise me due submission, I will undertake that you shall in no way be annoyed by those who have been the witnesses of your fall. Here is my hand, in token of future goodwill and friendship."

As he spoke, he frankly held out his hand, and the woman's sallow cheek flushed as she raised her own to take it; but as she gazed eagerly in his eyes, the new-born hope that had risen within her for a moment was crushed by his cold, calm gaze, and in an access of fury she struck his hand from her, and stood grinding her teeth.

"Submission!—yes, of course—to submit," she cried, "and cringe before our lord and master—man. No! Never! I'd sooner die, pent up here in this wretched crib."

"And yet you offered submission—and your love once," said Helston, quietly.

"Coward!" she hissed; "have you come here to insult me—to trample upon the wretched woman's weakness that gained the better of me?"

"No," said Helston, calmly, "I came to offer the woman to whom I could not give my love, the friendship and esteem I would gladly make her own."

"His friendship—his esteem!" hissed Deborah. "I asked him once for bread, and he brings me a stone—a portion of the esteem and friendship that he shares out amongst the hundred or so degraded creatures—the ladies of his harem!"

"You foul-mouthed termagant!" exclaimed Helston, angrily; "how dare you utter such a calumny? Henceforth, Deborah Burrows, you remain a close prisoner for the well-being of all here, till time shall have brought certain repentance, and you shall as a suppliant ask for pardon, for your false and cruel words."

He turned from her, as she stood there, malignant and revelling in the sting her words had possessed, and left the cabin. But he did not see what followed; for, as the door closed, the whole aspect of the

woman changed: Her hands were stretched out to him; she breathed his name with passionate adoration; and beating her breast, she sank grovelling on the cabin floor, tearing down her hair, and pressing her hands upon her white, compressed lips to keep back the cry of agony that was struggling for utterance.

"Oh, I love him—I love him!" she moaned at last.

And as she said so, she started up, thrust back her hair, and listened lest her words should have been overheard; and then, sinking back, she sat for hours, waiting for the calmness which would not come.

And then the days glided by, and became weeks, and the weeks months, till there came the time of peril which has been described—a time of horror, which Deborah witnessed from the cabin, too proud to cry for help till she found that she was left alone in the ship, when the strong desire for life asserted itself, and she strove to escape.

She tried the window for the hundredth time; but the stout iron bars that had been placed across months before by Thello, by Helston's orders, were still there, and the door was fast as ever.

What was she to do? Was there to be no escape? Oh, it was too horrible; and in her agony she shrieked aloud, till she sank upon the floor, trembling, hoarse, and utterly exhausted.

"The cowards!" she cried. "To leave me here to perish, while they make good their escape! Where is Helston's manliness now? Where is Laurent—the black—the women? Oh, Heaven, am I to be reserved for such an awful death as this!"

She ran to the window again, and saw the awful dust cloud, the flaming lightning, heard the roar of the lava, and began to breathe with difficulty as the strange, sulphurous, oppressive glow made its way into the cabin.

The agony the woman passed through was maddening, for she was alone. The cluster of sufferers on the hill knew acute anguish, but they had the solace of being free, and there was company to cheer them. Deborah, weakened mentally and bodily by her long confinement, was alone; and in her despair she beat her head against the door, and cried to the man she had repelled to come to her aid.

"He loves me—he must love me!" she moaned. "I have laid bare my heart to him, and he cannot leave me here to perish. For I must live—live to love him, and he will return it! Oh, Charles, Charles, do not leave me here to die!"

But her cries seemed to be repeated back to her from the wooden sides and ceiling of the suffocating little cabin; and above all came the awful, increasing roar, and the lurid glare from the ever-flowing lava, teaching her that there was a terrible conflagration at hand, but where she could not see.

It was more than human brain could bear, and for the next half-hour she was in a state of insensibility, from which she was aroused by a sense of oppression at her chest.

She rose to her feet and staggered to the little window, to which she held her flushed face, trying to drink in a freshening draught of air; but the atmosphere was scorching, tongues of flame

were darting through it, the sky seemed turned to glowing copper where the vast clouds did not float, and to the prisoned woman it appeared as if the end of all things was at hand.

Her mind was now confused; and when she tried hard to make out what could be the cause of the awful hours through which she was passing, her brain began to reel, and she could only cling there, panting and waiting for the end.

Suddenly a cry aroused her, and she started from the window, to stand trembling and motionless in the middle of the room.

For she recognized the voice, and a smile crossed her face and white lips as her breast rose and fell.

The horrible sense of confusion passed away, and she stood there erect and with her mind once more clear, for she told herself that help was at hand, and that it was he—the man she hated as passionately as she loved him—who had come at last to be at her side in this awful time of peril.

"Yes," she gasped—and her voice sounded wild and strange—"he has come to be by my side to save me, or else that we might die together."

CHAPTER XXII.—FOR LIFE—AND DEATH.

HELSTON knew his danger; but he did not hesitate. There was that poor woman locked a prisoner in her cabin, and he was bound to save her, at the risk of his life.

It was a race with the stream, which was running round the hill; but he reached the sands, and was speeding on, when a wild cry arrested his footsteps, and looking back it was to see Grace Monroe running, chased by the lava, and with her hands outstretched to him.

He uttered a hoarse cry, and for a few moments his nerve seemed to leave him. Then recovering, as from some horrible nightmare which held him back, he sped towards her, clasped her hand, and together they ran for the ship.

Not a moment was to be lost; for the lava flood was coming swiftly, and the fate of the ship was sealed. But they made such speed that, as they climbed panting to the deck, the lurid stream was a couple of hundred yards away, gliding softly over the sand in a flood about two feet deep, and widening ever as it came.

Helston gave a glance around, saw the direction of the flood, and made up his mind which way to retreat. Then, snatching up an axe, he made for the cabin.

Two strokes dashed off the lock; and, as Grace stood gazing, the door fell back, and there stood Deborah, white and haggard, but perfectly calm.

"I knew you would come and save me," she said, hoarsely.

With a cry of joy, she flung herself upon his neck; but as she did so, and Helston struggled to loosen her hands, she caught sight of Grace standing panting and shivering, between fear and agony of mind.

"You here!" said Deborah, bitterly. "I might have thought so."

"Woman, are you mad?" exclaimed Helston. "Here, quick, this way. Down this rope."

He led the way towards the other side of the ship, making fast a rope to the torn bulwarks.

"No," said Deborah. "Why should I escape?"

"You madwoman!" roared Helston, "you will destroy us all."

For as he spoke the flood of lava came stealthily on, hissing over the sand, which it fused into a solid mass as it flowed.

"Let us die, then," said Deborah, bitterly. "What is there to live for?"

"Better days," said Helston. And he caught Grace in his arms, twisted the rope round her, and half threw her over the side. "Run," he shouted, "straight on for the point, keeping towards the sea."

But Grace stood motionless, watching the scene enacted upon the deck; for at that moment Deborah threw her arms round Helston, and clasped him tightly.

"You are going to her," she said.

"Yes, and to take you too," he cried. "Look—there is not a moment to lose. Run, Grace, run," he cried, frantically.

The heat of the coming lava was now awful, and the pitch upon the vessel began to bubble and seethe.

"No," said Deborah. "I would rather stay and die with you."

"Madwoman!" cried Helston again.

"Yes, and no wonder," she said, bitterly. "Enough to make me—shut in there."

Helston felt that words were of no avail; and seizing Deborah in turn, he tried to bear her to the side farthest from the lava, but she wrestled against it, and crippled his efforts with her tight embrace.

"Yes," she muttered, as she clung to him, "hold me fast, and let me die in your arms—it will be better thus. I am not afraid to die. Never be hers—never clasp her thus."

She seemed to hiss these words in his ear, as she held him with all her strength; and, as he struggled with her, the lava touched the ship's side. In a moment it leaped into flame, and a wild, heart-rending shriek burst from Grace, as, in that lurid light, she stood with arms outstretched towards the ship.

"Helston! Charles!" she shrieked. "Oh, Heaven, have mercy!"

A GENTLEMAN in Alabama, exerting himself one day, felt a sudden pain, and fearing his internal machinery had been thrown out of gear, sent for a negro on his plantation, who had made some pretensions to medical skill, to prescribe for him. The negro, having investigated the case, prepared and administered a dose to his patient, with the utmost confidence of a speedy cure. No relief being experienced, however, the gentleman sent for a physician, who, on arriving, inquired of the negro what medicine he had given his master. Bob promptly responded, "Rosin and alum, sir." "What did you give them for?" continued the doctor. "Why," replied Bob, "de alum to draw de part together, and the rosin to sodder um!" The patient recovered accordingly.

Chased by Wolves.

"FRITZ"

"Meinherr."

"Let the carpenter fit a strong rail round the big wood sledge."

"Yes, meinherr."

"Let it be done directly; and to-morrow, directly after lunch, harness to it the three smartest horses out of the stables."

"Yes, meinherr."

The sturdy fellow stood hesitating at the door, picking at his fur cap.

"Well, Fritz?"

"Meinherr will not think me rude."

"No; go on."

"Does meinherr mean to have a shot at the wolves?"

"That's it, Fritz."

"And meinherr thinks that, if we drive round the country over the snow, they will follow us?"

"They are so hungry, Fritz, that I feel sure they will. The shepherds say they are howling round the folds every night, and they killed two bullocks only last night."

"Yes, meinherr, they are sons of darkness; but would it not be better to take a bait, as they do in Northern Russia?"

"A bait? What do you mean?"

"If meinherr takes Hans with him on the sledge, and I pick out for him a nice little pig, we can tie him by one leg to the rails, and then make him sing, when the wolves will follow directly."

"Fritz, you are a genius," said my neighbour, who had come over to consult me about the mischief done by the savage beasts. "We will have the pig."

Fritz bowed, and left the room.

This conversation took place upon my estate in Podolia, where, during the bitter, long, snowy winter my people at the farm had been pestered incessantly by the herds of wolves which came down from the mountains and snow-clad pine forests to feast upon the flocks and herds; and to such an extent did they visit us, that the losses were as serious as they were exasperating.

I was not alone in my losses, for my neighbours right and left had to complain; and many were the visits of complaint and calls of condolence that were paid.

Traps were useless, for the beasts were too cunning. Hunting them was in vain, for we could never get up with them; and when we gave up, we had the satisfaction of hearing the savage brutes upon our track, ready to run us down had we not been well armed.

How to trap wolves by means of a wounded sheep has already been told in these pages; the plan we were about to adopt was very different, as will be seen.

The next afternoon, the first warning I had of the sledge being at the door—so deep was the snow—was the snort of one of the horses and the shrill squeal of a pig.

Two friends were with me, and we were well provided with double-guns and an amplitude of

cartridges, containing bullets and slugs—heavy shot, nearly as big as peas.

We were warmly clothed, in fur-lined tunics and boots, and had wolf-skin rugs as well, for the open-sided sledge was not the warmest of conveyances when the thermometer was far below zero; but the expectation of warm work, not without danger, kept us from feeling any chill.

The afternoon was glorious. The glittering snow lay piled up against the sombre, laden pine trees, the sky was like steel, and the sun an orange globe down in the south-west.

Fritz gave a broad grin as he sat on his low seat, holding the reins with both hands, and hardly controlling the three splendid horses lightly harnessed to the sledge.

And very proud I was of those animals, for they were the children of an English sire, their mothers being mares of the famous Ukraine breed—a breed, by the way, better mixed than pure.

As for Hans, he was squatted in the front of the sledge, nursing a fine large porker, who, although secured by one leg to the side of the vehicle, kept making insane efforts to leap off into the snow.

Hans tried petting, cajolery, caresses, and every blandishment that might please a pig of noble mind; but ours, evidently belonging to the race of Toby the wise, snuffed danger in the air, and so thoroughly exhausted the patience of my peasant servant, that at last he began to control piggy's wilful efforts by sound boxes on the ears.

"Which way shall we go, Fritz?" I said, as we took our seats.

"Leave that to me, mein herr," he replied. "I'll take you round the skirts of the Loddski Forest, and over the snow track by the mountains. I'll soon have the pack after you, and will keep the horses just ahead, ready to let go if there's danger."

"Will there be danger?" said one of my companions.

"There may be, mein herr," said Fritz, "for the wolves have grown very fierce; but we—Hans and I—have brought our hatchets, in case."

Off!

Fritz gave his reins a shake, and uttered a shrill cry—he had no whip, and the horses darted into their collars; the bell, hung from a bow of bent wood over the centre horse, began to tinkle, and away we went.

The wind rushed by our cheeks, making them tingle, and the sledge glided with a hissing, crushing sound over the crisp snow; and for the next half-dozen miles we seemed to fly.

The horses squeaked, neighed, and snorted with joy, as they tore up the snow, their manes and tails flying; and the whole affair was one of the wildest, soul-inspiring dashes I ever enjoyed.

We had passed several of the forests, and were now well out beyond cultivation, with the forest of great, jagged, weather-beaten pines on our left, and the snowy waste on our right, dotted here and there with clumps of pine, borne down by the weight of snow.

Suddenly Fritz began to check the speed of the horses, till they subsided into a walk.

"Breathe them a bit, mein herrs," he said. "Now, Hans!"

Hans gave a nod, and taking hold of the pig by the ear, the little fat beast responded by uttering a loud, shrill squeak, which echoed through the pine woods, and the horses gave an angry, impatient snort.

The pig repeated its wail again and again, but now the horses took no notice, only walked quietly on; till suddenly, in the distance, there was a long-drawn, ghostly howl, such as made one's blood chill, it was so horrible.

It was not merely horrible to us, but to the horses, who knew it well; and, shivering in every limb, they tried the strength of their harness by plunging into their collars, dashing off at a tangent, and nearly upsetting the sledge.

By judicious charioteering, Fritz saved us from being upset in the snow; but all his efforts could not keep the horses in anything short of a gallop; so, to prevent our going to too great a distance, he made a kind of circuit, which enabled our pursuers—for pursuers we had—to gain on us, their howl being taken up by a whole pack, which, as the pig was judiciously played on by Hans, came after us, full cry, so that we could hear them coming nearer and nearer every minute.

It was out guns now; and, as the horses cantered along in a wavy, zigzag line, we looked out anxiously behind, over the snow, till in the distance we saw first one, then another, another, a dozen specks, but only for them to prove to be crows, evidently in full chase.

"There's one," cried Hans at last, as the diabolical chorus grew plainer.

"Yes, two—four—a dozen," I cried.

And now, plainly, with heads up, came galloping along what looked like a pack of great, dark-grey dogs; while each moment more and more came on behind, trailing along in the race, till quite forty were in sight.

The excitement was now growing intense, for the horses could hardly be controlled. Fritz, however, by sheer strength of arm, kept them in till the wolves had well gained upon us, and then he let the poor shivering beasts take their own pace; for the excited pack could not only keep up with us, but evidently outrun us, judging from the pace at which they came.

Hans kept up the pig squealing, which he varied by pulling an ear, a leg, or the tail of poor piggy; and if it had been undergoing a dismembering process by the wolves, it could not have made more noise.

As the pack gained on us, and we seemed to fly over the snow, I seemed to realize all the old stories I had read about travellers pursued by wolves, and I felt plainly enough how pitiable would be the case of a sledging party unarmed, and with tired horses, pursued through the interminable forest by such a ghastly, grinning pack as were at our heels.

"Let them get well up, gentlemen," said Fritz, imploringly; "and then make every shot tell on the shaggy sons of Satan."

"Bang!" was the answer, as, the wolves now being well up abreast of and close behind the sledge, I gave the word to fire, set the example, and—missed.

Better luck followed the shots of my companions, for a wolf rolled over dead.

Then the firing became fast and furious, the pig squealing dismally, the wolves howling in dreadful din, and the horses snorting as they dragged and jerked the sledge over the snow.

Bang! bang! bang!

One wolf went down couchant, and lay panting with its tongue out; and then threw up its head, and howled dismally.

Another fell over upon its side, while yet another turned a complete somersault in the snow.

Far from daunting the pack, they tore on after us, giving us capital shots, as they tried to leap into the sledge; for the great, grey beasts were gaunt and savage with hunger.

The progress was so rough that we missed as often as we hit; but as we galloped on, mile after mile, it was to dot the snow with the grey carcasses of our pursuers, who, unfatigued, kept up the race, as fresh apparently as ever; and at last, as we grew weary of loading and firing, I turned to Fritz—

"Are we going in the direction of home?"

"No, meinherr," he said, "right away."

"Good heavens," I thought, "if the horses grew tired, we should be torn to pieces."

The thought was a wise one; for, in spite of having slain quite twenty wolves, there seemed to be as many as ever after us, in their long, unwearying gallop.

"Shall I make for home now, meinherr?" Fritz asked, coolly.

"Yes, certainly," I exclaimed.

And he began to bear off to the left, till I had the pleasure of knowing that we were now going straight for home.

My companions had been too much excited to pay any heed to direction, and they kept on firing away at the pests of our farmyards, while now, to make the most of my time, I loaded always with slugs, and fired into the thick of the pack.

The sun had now gone down like a globe of fire, and the grey, chill shadows were creeping over the plain. The cold was intense, and our speed tremendous; but, as if we had never slain one, there was the savage howling pack close after us, with a long tail of them right into the distance, as fresh wolves seemed to take up the pursuit.

I honestly believe that we made thirty of the savage creatures bite the snow before we got within sight of my own home wood, and I bade Hans silence the pig. For matters were getting serious, and, if we were pursued to my gate, a hand-to-hand combat was anything but desirable.

However, on the cessation of the pig's shrill yells, a portion of the pack gave up. Quite a dozen kept on, though; and one savage wretch took the lead, evidently aiming at the horses.

Twice I fired at the brute, and each time the horses gave such a bound that my aim was disarranged, and he escaped.

At the third shot, however, he rolled over, and just at the same moment my companions fired four barrels of slugs into the pack, with the effect that three more fell, and the rest gave up our pursuit, to begin devouring their comrades.

Five minutes later we had dashed into the yard, the sledge grazing one of the posts, as the frantic horses literally leaped in, to stand shivering with fear against the stable door.

Hans leaped out, and banged to the gates, and then we ran to the fence, to fire if the brutes came on; but they had had enough of it, and the horses were safely stabled, as was also the pig.

"Fancy, meinherr," said Fritz; "what a splendid wolf-rug those skins would have made."

Fritz was right; but skin and flesh were both digested by the rest of the pack, for nothing but a few scattered bones was to be seen next day in the snow.

That night, as we sat talking over our exploits—for it would have been madness for my friends to have attempted a journey home in the face of such danger—the wolves howled dismally round the house, and we made plans for further raids upon their numbers.

But, try what we may, they are always plentiful as the winter comes on; and of late they have refused to answer to the cry of the pig in a sledge, and when they do, carefully keep themselves out of shot, growing cunning, as do the crows.

Among the Icebergs.

CHAPTER XVIII.

I THINK I must have slept again; for the next thing I remember is a sense of cold, and directly after I heard the rough, harsh voice of old Brunyee telling us the storm was over, and that we must push on.

He stretched out his rough hand to help me; and then, stiff, numbed, and hardly able to stand, I was out beside him, where he stood, knee-deep in the drifted snow.

"That'll soon go off," he said, "if you try and get along a bit. That's it. And now, Ann, my gal, show us you've got a little sperrit too."

Ann answered his appeal by shaking away the snow, and taking my arm; and then, very slowly, we set off, sinking heavily at each step, for the light snow was like so much dust, and rose in clouds as we passed over it in our weary walk.

"Keep up, little one, keep up," old Brunyee kept saying. "You'll find yourself stronger at every step. Don't be afraid to lean on me, whatever you do, for I'm as hard and strong as a horse. Now, then, over we go."

As he spoke, he lifted me over a rough chasm in the ice, across which my numbed and helpless limbs would never have carried me; and then, for a few hundred yards, it was tolerably smooth, and the exertion began to restore a little circulation to my limbs—taking away, too, the dull, helpless feeling which made me gaze around me without noticing that which I passed.

At the end of another ten minutes, I found myself taking heed to this huge pile of ice, and to that mountain of drifted snow, the vast blocks that caused us to make *détours*, and everywhere the rough, rugged fragments that made our progress one slow, perpetual climb. The storm had passed away as rapidly as it had come upon us, and now

all was still as death, with the stars literally blazing from the black-blue sky. Ghostly grey pillars of ice were upon us on every side, clothed as it were in snow, which softened down their angularity, while giving to them a strange, weird aspect.

So awful was the silence there in that vast waste—where I could feel already that, if I sank down upon the soft, yielding snow, it would be to fall into a dull stupor, and then, without pain or trouble, into that deep sleep from which there would be no awaking—that I seemed only able to speak in a whisper, and then it was only to have my words checked by my companion.

"Don't talk, my little one," he said; "this cold's like a knife. We didn't ought to have come, but who could tell it would turn like this? It's freezing enough to split one's figure-head, and I can't help it; but I'm puzzled. This snow seems to have changed the looks of everything: the track's gone, the ice is different, and I don't know anything again. I'm doing my best, though, and God help us with the rest."

I must confess that, much as I had thought of the perils of the north seas before, I had no idea of the vastness, the illimitable wildness, of the terrible region. And this, then, was only a faint dawning of the perils that those who tried to pass a winter here had to encounter. What must it be, then, when the long, dark night came—when the cold would be so intense that to encounter its icy breath would be almost certain death?

Leaning heavily on Brunyee's arm, I was striving my best to keep up; but there was another burden now pressing me down, for the horrible thought now seized me that I was after all slightly insane, and that my madness would be the death of perhaps all these gallant men who had come to do my bidding.

For myself I did not seem to care, and if I were to lie down and sleep, it would only be the sleep that had overtaken poor Mark and his companions.

Was this pain and suffering I now felt the means of awakening me from the delirium from which I had suffered for many weeks past? It seemed so; and in the despair of the moment, the hot tears rolled down my cheeks, and I knew that I would have given anything to recall my hasty words—to have arrested the progress of those who had gone from the ship, and whom I seemed to have sent to destruction.

The mental anguish seemed to have one effect, though—it nerved me to fresh exertion; the numbness passed off, to give place to a fierce burning pain, that was almost agony; and I rejoiced in my suffering as I struggled on over the rugged ice.

"Will it soon be daylight, Brunyee?" said Ann, in a low voice.

"Not yet, my lass, not yet. I wish it would, for I can't make out my bearings a bit. But there, don't be down-hearted. Love and bless you both, I won't say now that you didn't ought to have come; but let me get you both safe back in the *Blink*, and no more 'scursions of this kind for neither of you. Hold up, my pretty; rayther slippery it is, but we're getting on, and we can't be very far from the ship now. I say, though, my dears—I hardly like to ask you to, but it would be no end of comfort—cheers

you up, strengthens you, warms you, keeps you from thinking about your troubles, and altogether a blessing to a sailor in distress."

"But, bless the man, what is?" said Ann, impatiently. "What do you mean?"

"Mean, my dear? Why, didn't I say at first? Why, a bit o' 'bacco each; though I don't suppose as I shall get you to try it."

How could I laugh or be angry at the poor fellow, when he was speaking from his own experience? and his words were those that he thought the words of wisdom. I tried to laugh, and say a few words of cheering import—that we were getting on well, or that I could hold out; but the smile must have been a look of agony, and the words never passed my lips.

What I suffered, though, was not seen, on account of the dense muffling veil I wore, now turned into a sheet of glassy ice, which obstructed my view as I stumbled on; but I could see enough of the dreary prospect around: ice, snow—ice, snow, everywhere—the one hard and cruel, the other soft and seductive, wooing me ever to its embrace that I might lie there and sleep—sleep and forget my troubles.

Day at last; the golden glow bathing the summits of the ice crags, as slowly the sun rose above the horizon, to stay there for but a brief season before descending once more, to leave us for a long, weary night.

I remember asking myself should I ever see it rise again, as, in a numbed, helpless way, I strove to do all that I was told, and in a dream heard what Brunyee said.

Poor fellow, he was in deep distress, and thoughtlessly added to our trouble by thinking, as it were, aloud.

"I've been and gone and done it," he muttered. "I've no more notion where we are than nothing. I seem to know that hill, and yet I don't. Everything seems changed."

His reverie was broken by his realization of our state, and, thoroughly awakening to the impossibility of getting along any farther without help, he stopped thinking for a few moments, before climbing to the summit of an icy mass, and looking far and wide, but evidently without avail; for he came down shaking his head, took me up in his arms in spite of my protestations, and carried me for fully a couple of hundred yards, to where the snow formed a slope against the piled-up ice.

"What are you going to do?" said Ann, hoarsely.

"Make a nest for you both here, my little ones," said the old man, cheerfully.

And setting me down, he began to tear out the snow, and beat it down with his feet, so as to make a great hole.

"But it will be burying us alive," cried Ann, desperately, as she realized the old man's plans.

"You may call it burying alive if you like, my dear," he said, toiling hard the while at his task—"I call it making of you a snow house, where I shall cover you up snug, and, after taking the bearings, go and find help somehow, and come back to you."

"Oh, Mr. Brunyee, for the sake of this poor dear girl, don't, pray don't forsake us," said Ann. "Don't

leave us in this horrible wild place alone, lost—lost for evermore. You'll never find us again."

"Now, just look here, my lass," said Brunyee, sternly; "if your young lady there says to me, 'Sam Brunyee, take me with you,' I shall know it's no good, but I shall do it, and I shall carry her till I drop down dead-beat. If so be she says 'Make this place snug with the furs, and let's wait till help comes, and stop with me,' I shall just stop as I'm told; but, mind you, I shall not be able to carry her many miles, and as to help coming, who's to bring it? Neither of those ways aint no good; but if you'll just creep inside there, where you'll be warm, and let me cover you up with this here snow, which you won't know from a white blanket, and then lie there and eat your bit of a mess out of the bag, and drink the drop of rum, I can go off free and find where we left the ship, and come back with a sledge for you, when all will be right. So, now then, what's it to be?"

"Don't let him go, Miss Jessie," sobbed Ann; "he'll never come back again."

"Strike me down—"

"Hush!" I exclaimed, eagerly, as I held out one fur-covered hand—"I believe you, Brunyee, without that. Go, and come back to us as soon as you can. You are quite right."

Ann did not venture a word in protestation, but took my hand, and stepped where the old sailor directed us, for him to begin directly after breaking the snow up round us.

"You see," he exclaimed, cheerfully, "it's all nonsense to talk about being buried alive, when it's only in snow, which is on the top of ice, which is on the top of water, and all ready for the sun to melt it away. If it had been sile as I wanted to cover you with, why, it would be different altogether; but it aint sile, and there aint no sile anywhere here, my dears—nothing but snow. That's right, sit close, while I spread the fur over you; and when you're covered in, you can move about, and the place will soon settle down round you into your shape."

"Why, Lord bless you, my dears," he continued, as he brushed up the ice, "what does natur' do with the pretty, tender flowers she wants to take care of in the winter time? Why, covers 'em up with snow. Here you are, then, two o' natur's pretty, tender flowers; and I'm doing natur's work—covering you up snug and warm with snow; and don't you be scared, I'll come back and fetch you, safe enough."

The sun was already setting; and as with one hand Brunyee held up the skin rug to draw it a little tighter, the last rays shone full upon his rugged old face, while he spoke those last words, "I'll come back and fetch you, safe enough." But before he dropped the rug, I saw his lips move, and as the cover fell, and we were once more in total darkness, his face seemed still before me, and the lips yet moved, and I seemed to know the words he had said in conclusion to himself, and those words were—

"If I live!"

For perhaps a quarter of an hour we could hear the soft pat-pat of the snow that was scraped up and banked over us, and then there was the muffled sound of Brunyee's voice as he uttered what was

meant for a cheery good-bye, when all was silent as the tomb.

I remember thinking so, and then trying to realize our position—how long we should live like this; whether Brunyee would get back to the ship, and if so whether, when he came in search, he would find us again; or would another storm rise and obliterate all traces of our whereabouts, so that we slowly sank into our last sleep?

I was roused from my thoughts by the low, deep sobbing of Ann, who was weeping bitterly.

"I can't help it, Miss Jessie," she sobbed—"I have held up to the last, and now I'm that weak, that if I don't cry well I shall never be able to bear it. Oh! Miss Jessie," she cried, hysterically, and her voice sounded heavy, muffled, and strange, "why did you go and dream that they were calling to us to come and help them? They couldn't have been, or else they would have been waiting ready to be taken aboard when they saw us come, or else have been ready to help us out of this dreadful place."

I reassured her, tried to comfort her; and at last so far succeeded that she sank to sleep in my arms, a sob now and then struggling from her labouring breast. And now it was that I felt the awful solitude of our position, and all its perils—how all depended upon the efforts of that one faithful heart; and a shiver of dread now passed through my frame.

How can I relate all that passed now during the next weary hours? We were not cold, in spite of the intensely low temperature without and the icy walls of our prison; but inclination to talk was gone, and in silence we waited for the end.

At times I slept a heavy, oppressive slumber—a sleep which I fought hard against, lest it should be one from which I should wake no more; but nature was all-powerful, and, in spite of every effort, I sank into the stupor again and again, now waking clear to the peril in which we were placed, now in a confused state, unable to realize our position, the darkness, and the strange, cramped sensation that attacked our limbs.

We had a little provision with us, but it was soon all gone, though I knew afterwards that Brunyee had left all with us, to go himself hungry away; and now, if help did not soon come, I felt that it would be too late.

Once I was for proposing to Ann that we should strive to throw off the cover, and at least die with the breath of heaven upon our cheeks; but soon the inclination was gone, and all became a dull, heavy state of dreamy confusion, from which I awoke to feel that I was being carried. Then I heard Stephen Ellerby's voice, and then all was once more mist and darkness.

CHAPTER XIX.

IT was a fortnight after our rescue that, at my wish, Brunyee was brought into the cabin, where, wrapped in furs, we all sat round the glowing, red-hot stove, and he related to me how our deliverance was effected.

"You see, miss, I didn't ought to have gone without a compass, and taking the bearings of the ship, and that's how it was. Capen Pash here, and Mr. Solly, and Master Stivvun have been a bit hard on

me; but how could I help that snow storm coming and rubbing out every landmark and thing by which a man could steer? Why, to-night it was all one thing, and to-morrow morning all the other. I knew my way to-night, but to-morrow morning I didn't know anything about it; and so we were lost.

"You see, I thought that without you I could get along back to the ship so much better, and so I got you put snug away; but there, as soon as I was alone, I didn't know whether I was lying north, south, east, or west of the ship, and the more I wandered about, the worse I was off. I tried a fresh bit of 'bacco; but, no, it wouldn't cheer me a bit, though I climbed up the biggest piece of ice I could find, and sat there looking about till I was nearly frozen stiff, when I crept down and went on again—now making sure I was right, now giving up, and trying in another direction, till a curious feeling, something like what a man must feel when he's afraid, came upon me, and I shook my head, and beat my chest, and tried all I could to bring myself round. But there, Lord bless you, miss, the air out here's stronger than the strongest grog, and I soon found it too much for me; and when it had got to be about the middle of the night, there was nothing else for it but to scrape a hole in the snow, and burrow in as far as I could, to keep myself alive.

"I was out and at it again the next morning, as hard as I could; but I must have been dizzy still, for all I could do was to walk on and on, hour after hour, climbing, slipping, and falling, and always getting up again; till at last I was so blind and silly that in getting down the side of a lump of ice I fell, and though I tried hard, I couldn't get up again, and it seemed to me that it was about all over, when I heard a dog bark, then another and another, and soon after that there were voices, and I tried to shout, but I couldn't.

"It was very hard that, miss, to know that there was help close at hand that I might send to you; and now I couldn't warn them. I tried, though, hard, again and again, for I could see them now, our party going slowly back, not a hundred yards from where I lay, the men with their heads down, trudging wearily along, and in another minute I knew it must be all over—all over with me—and no help sent to you; and the thought of that sent such a pang through me that I tried once more, but not a sound could I make.

"But just as it seemed to be all over, and I felt that I was sinking, one of them looked my way, and, lowering his gun at my furry-looking carcase, came cautiously forward, evidently taking me for something to shoot. He soon saw the difference, though, and threw up his gun and hurried up, and, all covered with ice as he was, I knew it was Master Stivvun.

"They weren't long in hysting me atop of the sledge, and covering me with what skins they had; and first one spoke to me and then another—Master Stivvun being frantic-like at me because I didn't speak.

"But I wanted to, and I tried hard, all I knew; but not a word would come till a long while after, when they got me to the ship, which was in a different direction altogether to what I thought, and then

they had to set to and thaw me down before I could say a word, when I told 'em where you were.

"There was nothing else for it; and then the sledge and dogs and them as volunteered were soon ready, taking plenty of skin rugs and things to wrap you in, and I was laid on the sledge to act as guide. And what a guide I was, when I'd wandered about so that I hadn't the leastest idee where you were! And we went on, and on, and on, hour after hour, till we hit upon my track, and followed it back till we found you; and none too soon, nayther. And there, miss, that's about all; and thank God it was no worse."

Yes, that was all. I had been in great danger, and Stephen Ellerby had been the means of saving me; and soon I should have to thank him for what he had done.

I recovered from the illness brought on by my exposure, to find that the days had been gradually declining from a little sunshine to the warm glow in the south, and lastly to twilight at mid-day; but there was the light of stars and moon, brighter than I ever saw them before. But the weather had grown intensely cold, the thermometer at night being below zero. Preparations, though, had been made to meet this rigour, with every appliance that forethought could supply. The roofing over the deck was banked over with snow, double doors were contrived for exit and regular habits enforced—certain hours being set apart for hunting and search, two expeditions having been made by the men in the hope of finding some trace of the lost.

I found, though, that Brunyee had been in neither of these; and perhaps unfairly, perhaps with justice, the impression was strong upon me that these journeys had been made in a cold, half-hearted manner, the men having been discouraged by the snow and ice, the storm having fallen upon them in a bitterly exposed place, where they suffered severely for some hours, and, poor fellows, they had not the strong incentive that I had to strive against the wintry blast. But how I envied them their hardihood and strength, as I thought of my own weak, helpless efforts.

A DOTING mother of a waggish boy having bottled a lot of nice preserves, labelled them, "Put up by Mrs. Doo." Johnny, having discovered the goodies, soon ate the contents of one bottle, and wrote on the bottom of the label, "Put down by Johnny Doo."

LORD MELBOURNE, when Prime Minister, once expressed his surprise that though they met frequently in confidential intercourse, Black (the editor of the *Morning Chronicle*) had never asked him for a place, adding, "There is no man living to whom I would sooner give a place than yourself." "I thank you, my lord," said Black, with the utmost simplicity and *bonhomie*, "but I do not want a place. I am editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, and like my work and the influence it gives me, and do not desire to change places with anybody in the world—not even with your lordship." "Mr. Black," said Lord Melbourne, shaking hands with him very heartily, "I envy you—and you're the only man I ever did."

Robinson's Last.

WE had a genius, named Robinson, down at our seaport of Perrywinkleton.

He was always inventing things, and the mayor and corporation believed in him, because it gave them jobs.

Our mayor was a timber merchant; so Robinson's proposal for a wooden pier was accepted, the pier was built, and washed away.

Robinson's idea for an esplanade was taken up, because Councillor Prawnham owned the stone quarry; and the esplanade was made, and not washed away, because it died a natural death, and was buried four feet deep—in sand.

Robinson's last was a pavement.

He had seen asphalt paving in London, and seen it laid; so he came down, red-hot, proposed a new pavement for our High-street of an asphalt of his own invention, and, as he artfully contrived a job out of it for the mayor and the whole town council, the plan was carried unanimously, and the next week the High-street became chaotic.

That street was in ruins for two months, during which it was picked up, rammed down, sifted, concreted, wetted, dried, smoothed, ironed, mangled, and then it was ready for Robinson's patent hydro-carbo-galvanic-terro-ligno-adamanto-unabrado-bitumenous-asphaltic-pitch paving.

It was a long name, and it took a long time to lay it down.

For weeks the town was full of a horrible black smoke. All the blacks in London seemed to have come down to the seaside for a change, and were always settling on the ladies' noses, when they did not prefer clean collars.

There were ten great cauldrons in the High-street, and in these ten cauldrons so many black demons were always busy at work cooking Robinson's patent hydro-carbo-galvanic-terro-ligno-adamanto-unabrado-bitumenous-asphaltic-pitch paving.

Great fires were always burning underneath, smoke rose in clouds, and the black demons kept slowly breaking up and putting in bits of something very nasty, which smelt nastier, and stirring it up with big spoons; and when it was done, ladling it out like soup into big pots, which other men carried between them, and made a mess with in the road.

For they were just like so many dirty children, making black puddings and mud pies in the gutters—pouring out the nasty stuff, and patting it down, and smoothing it, till the people in the town began to use naughty words; and one wicked man went so far as to say that he wished Robinson were boiled in his patent hydro-carbo-galvanic-terro-ligno-adamanto-unabrado-bitumenous-asphaltic-pitch.

That man did not die—choked by his own words—but there can be little doubt about his ultimate fate.

At last the street was declared paved, and the new paving was opened by the mayor and corporation, who walked over it in their long, fur-trimmed gowns, carrying wands, and preceded by the town crier and beadle without his bell.

Somebody said "Hooray!" when they got to the end of the long, black, shining street, and then half

a dozen dirty little boys ran across, in spite of the efforts of two borough policemen, and turned wheels, as they do beside carriages going to the Derby. After which the volunteer band played "God save the Queen," without the drum and trombone—for the drum had got the toothache, and the trombone, who was head porter at the railway station, couldn't get a half-holiday on account of the influx of visitors who had come to see Robinson's patent hydro-carbo-galvanic-terro-ligno-adamanto-unabrado-bitumenous-asphaltic-pitch paving.

While the weather remained cold, Robinson's paving did well enough; but in the spring it began to soften, and by the time summer came it was like dough, excepting that when it got hold of anything it held on like grim death.

A man would attempt to walk across it, and would sink in; then he would find that he couldn't move either leg. Then he would cry for help, and somebody would push a plank out to him, and he would struggle out of his boots and walk ashore.

Miss Mary Ann Woshington had a sad accident there, for she came to grief going across. People warned her that it wasn't safe; but she wouldn't believe it, and went laughing across to try—for if you tell a woman a thing is not safe she's sure to want to try it.

Well, she hadn't taken four steps before she squeaked, and then she squalled, for her high heels had stuck fast, and her tight dress so hampered her that she went down backwards, sank in, and lay there calling for help, like a bas-relief come to life on a marble temple.

Of course all the young fellows in Perrywinkleton came to help her, for Mary Ann was very pretty; but how to get her out they didn't know.

It was all easy enough as far as her head, for she'd got on a fashionable Ulster, and they only had to unbutton it, and rip up her boots; but then there was her hair.

Now, if that lady had made an affidavit every day in the week that she did not wear false hair, no one would have believed her; but when they came to get her out of the asphalt, there was the test. It was, alas! real as real, and they had to take scissors and cut it all close to her head before they could get her free; and when they did, Mary Ann was a sight.

There were twenty-four young men affectionate to Mary Ann before that accident, and they all laid their hearts upon the altar of her love; but after Mary Ann had been carried home cropped, there were twenty-four young men who weren't in love with Mary Ann, and they all cried off.

There was a row that night, and the whole street was alarmed; for these twenty-four young men all went to the new paving, armed with a pair of scissors, to get a bit of Mary Ann's hair as a token of their blighted love, and they all got stuck fast, and fought with their scissors till the fire brigade came, and began to play upon them, when they gave it up, and laid backs, when number twenty-four walked out of his boots, and over the other fellows' backs to shore; number twenty-three walked out of his boots and over the other fellows' backs to shore; then number twenty-two had his turn, and twenty-one, and twenty, right down to number one; so that

all their lives were saved, and they all married and had two children, and lived happy ever after.

But of course they didn't all marry Mary Ann, who commenced a breach of promise of marriage case against the inventor of that asphalte pavement, and got heavy damages too.

Johnson's mule tried to cross it one day, and was captured, tight as wax, by the legs.

I was sorry for that mule, for he was such an intelligent beast. No one could get to him to feed him; so, being of an enterprising disposition, he set to and licked the asphalte.

By and by he found out that there was no nutriment to be got out of it, any more than by chewing india-rubber, so he began to sound his trumpet, beginning to neigh like a horse, and then shouting wild, and ending in a regular jackass bray.

Next day he took to making signals with his ears; for he was there still, and he couldn't walk out of his shoes, as they were nailed on. He evidently knew the telegraph code, for he'd shove one ear forward, and the other backward, and then both forward; and end by sticking them straight out sidewise, which, according to the book of Military Code Signals, Vol. IV., chapter 27, page 92, signifies "Now, then, arn't you going to hitch a fellow out?"

But no help came; so he rested his ears, and took to signalling with his tail—wonderful!

That tail stood right out, straight up, sidewise, t'other sidewise, angle of $22\frac{1}{2}$ perpendicular, slant-indiclar, horizontal, duplex, vertical, very tickle, much more ticklish, jewelled in four holes, every position you could name; and no help came.

Last of all, his signals got so plain that they launched the lifeboat, and it stuck fast; while no sooner did they lower their oars, and try to get her along, than they stuck too, so the crew came out, and swore—powerful.

Then, as the signals for help went on, they brought out the rocket apparatus, and fired lines over his back; but of course they were no use to a mule who couldn't even kick. They couldn't dig him out, so they put up a derrick, and a man reached the animal swinging in the air, and fixed the rope around under his fore legs. Then they hoisted him, and the mule rose with a thick rope of pitch hanging from each leg, so that by the time he got forty feet up he looked like a mule with an extraordinary tendency to grow in the legs. Then the tackle slipped, and the asphalte was so elastic that the mule flew back into the old place with a "chock." But they got him out at last, without his hoofs.

The way the cats stuck in that asphalte was something awful, and the noise worse. For no sooner was a cat fast by its paws than—bow-bow—at it went a dog, and he was fast too; when they went on talking to one another till they were smothered, which wasn't very soon. Ever so many cats and dogs were caught, and they perished, stuck by their feet; so that after a while the whole street was filled with boot legs and cat skeletons, and such rubbish, sticking upon the surface, until it looked like a jungle.

One hot day, a boy, running after his top, fell on the pavement, face downwards, and was clutched fast. They saved him by cutting his clothing open

in the back, and taking the boy out naked, like a pea from the pod; but he left the tip of his nose in the pitch.

So there was a row, and then the authorities thought they would take the pavement up. It couldn't be cut or dug, so the workmen undertook to roll it over, as you would roll over a sheet of music; but when they had gone forty feet it sprung back over the men, and assumed its old shape, except that there were four lumps on the surface where the buried workmen lay. At last they hitched twenty or thirty horses to one end of the pavement, and hauled it away. Then they slid it into the river, and it floated down below Spring Mill, and lodged upon a shoal, and there it remained permanently. In the course of a year a soil formed on it, and it is now rather a handsome island; and it is valuable, too.

No doubt some day it will be utilized by a mining company that wants to go into the business of getting out leather. There are veins of old boots in that island which would make the fortune of anybody who knows how to work them; and we are not certain but that it will pay to get out the cat bones for fertilizers.

Somehow or another there was something wanting, I can't say what; but, taken altogether, Robinson's patent hydro-galvanic-terro-ligno-adamantounabrado-bitumenous-asphaltic-pitch paving was not a success.

The Egotist's Note-book.

WHAT tame affairs are our grandest processions as compared to those in the East. When Lord Lytton entered Delhi the other day, his Excellency was accompanied by many civil and military officers, native chiefs, and princes, and the procession formed a most brilliant and imposing spectacle. The Viceroy and the officials rode for the most part on elephants, very few being on horseback. They were accompanied by six regiments of cavalry and two batteries of artillery, the whole procession forming a line three miles in length. The route, which was upwards of six miles long, was lined with troops throughout, and the concourse of spectators was everywhere immense. The steps and terraces of the Jumma Musjid were also crowded with on-lookers. The enormous mass of spectators, and the appearance of the chiefs in magnificent dresses sparkling with jewels, who, with their retinues seated on elephants and camels, were grouped at various points, produced a most splendid effect. There were altogether upwards of 1,000 elephants on the ground. The ceremony, which passed off very successfully throughout, lasted four hours. We don't sparkle much with jewels when we have a *fête*, but we display plenty of mud.

There is a fine chance now for any one with a taste for fishing, since, from the reports, there is a monster waiting off the south coast to be caught. One man says:—

"When on the look-out at Portland Bill this morning, about 10.20, I saw what at first appeared a long,

low, dismasted ship, with short, stumpy jury masts, about one mile S.S.W. off Portland. She looked like a vessel broken-backed, as her stem and stern were well out of water, and with something like smoke or steam rising up in midships. What was my surprise when, on looking through my glass, I saw it was a monster fish, with head and tail rising high above the swell of the sea, and the back nearly down to the level of the water; and what appeared at first to be smoke or steam were large jets of water thrown up like a big whale blowing, as I have seen them in the Arctic seas. The stumpy masts were immense long fins. All at once, with a tremendous bound, at least 30 or 40 feet high, and down again, almost like lightning, the huge monster disappeared."

This beats the sea serpent, who has not been seen of late. As I write this, I learn he has.

Everybody knows that a punch on the head is an assault; but most people will learn for the first time that it is a legal assault to make a noise. For at Brighton, the other day, a newsagent named Brigden was charged before the magistrate with assaulting a middle-aged man, named Matthews. It appeared that as complainant was passing defendant's shop, the latter ran out, touched him on the shoulder, and "shouted in his ear in such a hideous manner that he was laid up for three days." The defence was that the affair was a joke, and that complainant's nervous system was chronically unstrung, owing to intemperate habits. The parties were old friends; but the magistrate inflicted a fine and costs. Ergo, don't shout in anybody's ear.

There has been a case of snapdragon in the North, this Christmas, of so shocking a nature that the dragon was a very dreadful dragon indeed. It seems that a man went to visit his friends, and appears to have consumed spirits to an enormous extent, and to have provided himself with bottles of rum, which were concealed about his person to deceive the household. While his friends were temporarily absent from the house, he suddenly lost consciousness, and fell with considerable violence into the grate. One of the bottles of rum was broken in the fall, and the contents spreading in and around the grate, the drunkard soon became enveloped in flames. He appears speedily to have become aware of the perilous position in which he was placed, for, rushing into the yard, he shrieked piteously for assistance, and a constable was thus drawn to the spot. With difficulty his clothes were removed, and then it was found that the man had been shockingly burned, although he fortunately escaped with his life. Drunk as he was, it would have been much safer for him if he had carried the rum inside. But, seriously, when will people learn to be wise in their drinking?

They adulterate our bread, and make us ill; they adulterate our drinks—wine, milk, beer, tea, and coffee, and make us worse; and now they poison the physic we take to make us well. Here is one instance:—A druggist has been had up for selling two ounces of milk of sulphur which was not of the nature, substance, or quality demanded by the pur-

chaser. The sulphur was purchased for the purpose of analysis, and was found by the county analyst to contain 61 per cent. of plaster of Paris, and only 39 per cent. of milk of sulphur. The magistrate observed that the chief constable deserved credit for bringing the case before the bench, as mothers gave the drug to their children for skin diseases, and if a drachm of this mixture were given to a child, the result, in all probability, would be that the ingredients would harden, cause congestion and inflammation of the bowels, and even death. Why, the Yankee's wooden nutmegs and hams are blessings as compared to this.

Here is an incident of recent occurrence at a restaurant:—

A gentleman summons the waiter, and points to a hair which had introduced its sinuous folds into a dish of macaroni on which he was engaged.

"Ah!" says the waiter, cheerily, "I can tell you where that comes from. Our *chef* is in love, and is constantly opening a medallion containing a lock of his sweetheart's hair. Of course, some of it occasionally falls into the dishes."

The gentleman mutters something about "disgusting" and "beastly."

The waiter continues: "Beg pardon, sir, but would you mind giving me the hair? You see, he is so fond of her, that it quite pleases him when I bring back a stray hair or two."

The sublimity of impudence, however, was best displayed in a barber's shop. One of Figaro's customers sees a dog of ungainly aspect sitting opposite, intently watching him.

"Why does that dog look at me so?"

"Why, sir, occasionally my hand slips, and I am so unfortunate as to snip off a bit of ear."

"Eh! and what then?"

"Why, then he eats it."

The theatrical people seem to have made up their minds to take advantage of the lesson taught by the Brooklyn fire, for the manager of the Lyceum advertises the number of doors to his theatre that can be used in case of fire—namely, three in Wellington-street, one in the Strand, three in Exeter-street, and two in Burlington-street—nine in all.

A good deal of interest is being taken now in the proceedings of the Rev. Arthur Tooth, at Hatcham—a tooth that some people say ought to be stopped. But be that as it may, is it right that police should be on the spot to guard the church and protect the congregation? People learned in church law, say the reverend gentleman is breaking the law. Ergo, then, the police are protecting him in his wrong doings. But without entering into the rights and wrongs of the question, one cannot help being amused at the wit of the British mob. People were only admitted to the church at Hatcham by tickets, and as they came out, some wag in the crowd, in remembrance of railway journeys, shouted out, "All tickets ready, change here for Rome."

So the great 80-ton gun is cracked! No wonder.

The only puzzle is that the madness of the project was not discovered before. It has been patent to all thinking people long enough, that a gun that cannot be fired without breaking windows and shivering plaster ceilings will not be a fit inmate for a ship. In fact, it has long enough ago been proved that the gun would be as dangerous to friends as enemies. One would not mind, only it's such an expensive thing to keep, and we all have to help pay for its shot.

Here is how Dr. Richardson would build his houses for the future, so that we might be healthy, wealthy, and wise:—He would build a house on a basement of three arches, which should be thoroughly ventilated, and applied to various purposes, but which should have no direct communication with the house. His staircase he would have in a separate shaft at the back, each floor communicating with it by a door, so that the floors would be what might be called flats, and each of them could be ventilated independently. On the third floor he would place the kitchen at the front, and the servants' dormitories at the back; and from a pipe in the kitchen hot water could be conveyed to every floor, which would have its separate sink and dust shaft, so that there would be no going up and down stairs with pails and dust boxes. At the top of the house he would have, on a firm, almost level, asphalted roof, a brick and glass-covered garden, equal in extent to the area of the house. Into this the stair-shaft would finally enter, and any emanations from the lower part of the house would be eaten up wholesomely by the living vegetation. Heated readily from the kitchen, the garden might have at all times a summer temperature; the children could engage in luxurious and healthful play; the ladies would find occupation in the cultivation of flowers and evergreens; and in it the sterner sex might spend those hours which are now found so unspeakably dull, owing to the monotony of one or two rooms. Capital: just the sort of house one would like to live in; but how about the rent?

I'm afraid that it's very wrong to make jokes about clergymen, but then, Sydney Smith set the example, so I hold myself excused. Here, then, is a conundrum. Why cannot the priest of Hatcham be wrong in his doings; in other words, be a false tooth? Because he believes in incense, and is fixed on myrrh and real gums.

Mem.—Always keep up your spirits in flood-time. Never complain. Whine and water is a very weak combination, only fit for negus.

Photography is making grand strides, for an artist in Sydney has taken views, one of which is five feet by three feet two inches, and the other four feet six inches square. Apart from the size of the two pictures, they are splendid specimens of the photographer's art, the outlines being sharp and clear, and the various objects shown coming out prominently before the eye. The difficulty of producing pictures of such size can be best understood and appreciated by photographers, among many of

whom the belief is prevalent that it is not possible to execute photographs of such magnitude. In addition to the separate large prints, Mr. Holterman has executed a panoramic view of Sydney and the harbour thirty-three feet in length, covering a space about six miles in length, and the whole of the perspective is shown much clearer than can be seen by the naked eye.

A country gentleman has been writing to the papers, saying that he has more butter than he can use, and asking for the best means of keeping it for winter use. Only fancy! Having more butter—real butter—than he can use, in days when one is supplied with an oleaginous compound under the same name, and, on analyzing it, find that it is—what the people in the secrets of the trade mystery call it—merely *bosh*!

Can any one give me a hint how to cure a parrot of the habit of using bad language? In exchange, here is the way to keep it in good health and splendid plumage. Never give it animal food in any shape whatever; even milk, butter, and egg must be avoided, but fruit given in abundance. In addition, give the bird a bath frequently. To let a large watering-pot rain upon it is the best way, but take the chill off the water in the winter. My parrot is in the best of health and plumage, but a friend suggests that it is the shower-bath which makes him swear. It may be; but I do not think it is.

The ladies must, indeed, have exhibited a wonderful appearance in 1709. Behold one equipped in a black silk petticoat, with a red and white calico border, berry-coloured stays trimmed with blue and silver, a red and dove-coloured damask gown flowered with large trees, a yellow satin apron trimmed with white Persian, and muslin head-cloths with crow-foot edging, double ruffles with fine edging, a black silk furbelowed scarf, and a shotted hood! Such were the clothes advertised as stolen in *The Post Boy* of November 15. To cover all this finery from the rain, the fashionables had umbrellas, which it seems were then considered too effeminate for men. Ladies' head-dresses were very costly. Take the following prices from the Lace-chamber on Ludgate-hill—"One Brussels head at forty pounds; and ground Brussels head at thirty pounds; one looped Brussels head at thirty pounds.

NOW that winter has come, and ladies are looking forward to many a pleasant evening spent in the enjoyment of the dance, they often forget the attendant fatigue, until the exhaustion of the following day reminds them that every pleasure has its alloy. This fatigue is in great measure produced by the tight ligature or garter with which the stockings are fastened, hindering the free circulation of the blood. Medical men are unanimous in declaring the use of garters to be a most fruitful source of disease. Every lady desiring health and comfort should at once provide herself with a pair of the new patent stocking suspenders, made by Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London. The price is only 3s. per pair, of any draper, or post free for two extra stamps.

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Three Hundred Virgins. A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS.

CHAPTER XXIII.—A REPRIEVE.

HELSTON had for the moment been stupefied, but Grace's cry roused him; and with a tremendous effort he forced Deborah to the ship's side, and together, as he caught with one hand at the rope, they rolled over the broken bulwark, to fall heavily upon the sands, as the lava seemed to lick up the ship, and it roared into a mighty flame.

There was no pause: one moment, the ship was standing bedded in sand, its rusty black sides glistening in the glow, where the molten pitch was oozing and bubbling out; the next, the river of golden fire was upon it, touching it, for it to blaze up at every touch.

Half stunned, Helston rose, and tried to drag his companion away, for the lava was creeping round now at either end of the burning ship; but had it depended on him alone, they must have perished. As it was, Grace ran to them, and seizing one of the prostrate woman's wrists, they together dragged her along the sand, racing against the fiery stream, which threatened to cut them off.

Helston was so stunned by his fall that he hurried on in a dazed, helpless way; and the lot fell to Grace to direct their course. Twice over it seemed that they must fail, for they had to drag their burden diagonally towards the sea, the lava coming on farther and farther; but another fifty yards, and they would clear the stream, and stand on higher ground, where the sand was thrown up by the tide.

They had nearly reached it, with the ship a tower of flame, and the golden creeping stream nearing them ever, when, utterly exhausted, Helston stumbled and fell.

"Fly—escape," he groaned.

As he uttered those words he darted an anguished look at Grace, in whose countenance was depicted the anguish of her heart. It seemed to her, for the moment, that all was over, and that a horrible death was about to overtake the man she loved.

For herself she thought nothing; but, turning from him, took two or three steps towards the burning flood, in the mad idea that she might offer herself a sacrifice in his stead, and so save him.

A moment's glance at the awful, relentless manner in which the lava advanced taught her the folly of her plan. In another minute it would have swept over where they all stood, and her little body would have had as much effect in staying the fiery wave, as a fly.

She ran back, her face blistering and smarting with the awful heat; and as Helston saw her animated countenance lit up by the glow of the flood, she seemed to him more beautiful than ever.

"Quick!" she gasped; "you must make an effort. Try—try to escape—here, farther up the slope!"

"It is useless," groaned Helston. "Save your own life."

But Grace threw herself upon him, and, with the lava scorching him, he struggled once more to his feet; they seized their insensible burden, staggered on for another twenty yards, and, with Deborah and

Grace's clothes already smouldering, fell upon a hillock of sand, to be hidden the next moment from sight, as the lava flowed by them and met the sea with a frightful hiss, and a cloud of steam, which increased in volume as the sea hissed and boiled, floated over the shore.

The roar and shriek of the conflict was then awful, for, as the lava stream, golden and glowing, plunged into the sea, the latter, as if resenting the intrusion, kept sending in great waves—the subsiding relics of that which had swept the shore at an early stage of the eruption—and these leaped up and spent themselves upon the fiery flood, which, remorseless, waveless, and calm, swept on, driving the sea back and back, its advance guards breaking up into hissing, steamy clouds, which, like the spirits of the slaughtered waves, floated upward, away from the scorching earth.

A few moments' breathing space, and they dragged the inanimate burden another fifty yards. Then a rest, and a hundred yards were placed between the glowing danger and themselves; for the lava flowed straight on towards the sea, cutting a channel in the sand, and spreading no more in their direction, as Grace threw her arms round Helston's neck, and buried her face in his breast.

Deborah lay beside them, but insensible, or a witness of her passion, Grace heeded not. In those awful moments of peril maidenly reserve and every thought of restraint were swept away. She could only think of the safety of the man she loved.

And there he lay back upon the scorched earth, blackened, stupefied, dazed. He did not heed her, only lay struggling for his breath, and feebly wondering whether they were yet to live.

One movement he made, though, sent a thrill of delight through the frame of the exhausted, trembling girl—for once he raised a weary arm and laid his hand upon her head, when she nestled closer to his breast, weeping silently, and waiting for the end, believing that ere many minutes had elapsed they should have to give up the little life that remained.

It was a good half-hour, though, before he recovered sufficiently to do more than lay his cheek upon her silky hair, for he had been sorely stricken by his fall. At last, though, half suffocated by the steam, he kissed her, and told her it was time to try for safety.

"We may yet live, darling," he whispered; and, struggling to his knees, he held the gentle form to his breast.

"Live?" she murmured—"live? No, it is impossible!"

She darted a shuddering glance round at the glowing lava, at the clouds of steam and ashes, and her voice seemed the feeblest of whispers.

"No," he said, "it is not impossible, Grace; we must struggle to the last."

He made an effort and rose, leaving her crouching on the sand, as he tried, in a giddy, helpless way, to make some observation as to their position; but amidst the din and confusion of roaring lava and shrieking steam, he could make out nothing, save that there was a possibility of their getting a little farther from the clouds of steam, which—sulphurous and hydrogenous—were wafted again and again to-

wards them, and rendered respiration almost impossible.

He crawled back to where Grace was crouching, and laid his hand upon her.

The poor girl shivered and started; but, as she raised her head and her eyes met his, a faint, weary smile crossed her lips, and she made no resistance as he drew her towards him.

"One word," he whispered, "only one. In a few minutes' time you may not be able to speak it. Grace, I love you with my whole heart. Tell me it is returned."

She smiled again very feebly, and her eyes half closed; but one arm was thrown round his neck, and she laid her head for a moment against his throbbing heart.

The contact gave him strength, and, with nervous force, he strained her to his breast, held her there for a minute, and then gently released her.

"There is—there must be hope," he cried.

And he started up with an intense feeling upon him that life would now be ten thousand times more bright and joyous, even if it were to be existence on a scorched and burning desert like this they were upon.

And then, and then only, did he try to revive Deborah, who lay as they had left her—her clothes scorched and burnt, but her face untouched, and bearing a calm smile upon the lips, as she lay with her eyes half-closed.

"Deborah, Deborah!" he said, excitedly, "wake—we are safe."

She paid no heed to his words, and he repeated them when his cry aroused Grace, who came to his side.

"She is stunned by the fall, or else the shock of these horrors has been too much for her reason."

At that moment the flood of lava seemed to receive fresh impetus, the sea boiled and shrieked, and scalding clouds of steam swept over them, blinding and almost suffocating with their dreadful fumes.

"Can you help me ever so little, Grace?" Helston shouted, though it sounded like a hoarse whisper.

"I'll try," she answered; "but this heat suffocates, and seems to render me helpless."

"Let us try," he said.

And, as they moved her, Deborah muttered a few words, in which the names of Helston and Monroe were plainly heard during a lull in the elemental strife.

Grace sighed heavily; but she did not pause in her task, but, exerting what strength she possessed, she helped her companion, and together they contrived, by little stages, to bear Deborah higher up, and laid her amidst the scorched and withered trees. An awful roar was still going on, and a mighty cloud of steam rose higher and higher, as the lava flowed into the sea; but the steam was less oppressive where they now were, as it floated far above them. The heat, though, of the soil was intense, and the fumes of burnt and smouldering wood were at times almost blinding.

Helston's first thought was of water, but there was none to be had, so nothing could be done to revive Deborah. They laid her with her face towards the sea, so that she might catch what little fresh air was

wafted in fitful puffs towards them, and then left her to see if they could find any chance of delivery from their awful position.

For it was fearful. On one side was the literally boiling sea, on the other, girding them in, the fiery flood of lava, which might at any moment rise relentlessly higher, and sweep over them.

Overhead were the dense clouds—smoke, steam, and volcanic dust—making all now as dark as night, but vivified by the flashes of lightning, the bursts of flame, and the ruddy golden glow from the broad-spread rivers of molten stone.

At times, the darkness would be almost black, the clouds coming lower and lower; but when suffocation seemed imminent—for it would have been impossible to breathe in such a breeze, charged as it was with fine ashes which choked their nostrils—a struggle would seem to supervene amongst the clouds, which were whirled in a wild chaos aloft; and at such times hot, but refreshing, currents of air would reach them from the sea, and give them respite from what seemed instant death.

It seemed wondrous to Helston that they could have existed so long, and the feelings of despair that had fallen upon them so frequently when they had been covered with finely-powdered, choking dust, or smitten by fiery blasts of cinders from the volcano, ceased to have their old effect; and in a dumb, stupid kind of despair they staggered a few yards this way or that way, within their circle of fire and water, hardly heeding the perils around.

Was it night? was it morning?

Neither could say. Time seemed to have been obliterated, and their reflective powers were so numbed that they could do no more than wait—helplessly wait, for that which was to come.

CHAPTER XXIV.—PERIL WITHIN PERIL.

"OH, for my sake, stay!"

They were Mary Dance's words to Laurent as she wreathed her arms round him and restrained him from following Helston and Grace; and even had he persevered, he would have been too late for so rapid was the motion of the lava, that ere he could have reached them he would have been cut off.

Laurent was a prisoner on the island of the lava sea.

The smoke from the burning trees, as has been stated, shut out what followed; and before many minutes had elapsed, huge volumes of ash cloud swept down upon them, followed by dense steam, turning the little light that had existed into night; and the black mingled pall increased moment by moment, all the terrified group crouched upon the earth struggling for breath, and panting with horror and excitement.

Mary Dance was clinging now to Laurent, and, as he drew her closer, and his lips sought hers, she responded for a few moments freely to his caress, and then drew back.

"Is it to be death?" she whispered to him.

"I cannot say," he replied. "It seems impossible that we can exist for long."

"And is there no escape?" she said.

"We are surrounded by molten lava, which would

turn us to ashes in a moment if we attempted to cross. There is no escape."

Mary uttered a piteous sigh.

"It is very hard to die so young," she whispered.

"Give me your forgiveness first."

"My forgiveness, Mary?" he cried, straining her to his breast. "For what?"

"For doubting you—for being so cruel and thinking ill of you—that you were wanton and reckless."

"My darling," he said, calmly, as he drew her head upon his shoulder—"tell me you love me, and let us live in the present. Never mind the past."

"Love you!" she passionately whispered—"I have always loved you, and the more I fought against it the more I loved."

"I am satisfied," he cried.

And then, clasped in each other's arms, they stood there, in the midst of that horror of thick darkness, waiting for the end.

"Let us try to comfort some of these poor creatures," Mary whispered at last.

And together they went from group to group, feeling their way in the darkness, and whispering a few words of consolation here and there, though, for the most part, upon ears that were deaf, so prostrated were all with the horrors of the situation.

The darkness increased, and, as time went on, there was the fearful hissing and boiling of the sea where the two floods joined, while the darkness was still intense.

But, even in that time of terror, there were ludicrous incidents, not the least of which were the confessions made by those who believed themselves upon the point of death.

For, during a lull in the fearful roar and shrieking of fire and water, there rose up a loud, thick voice, repeating again and again.

"Oh, lor—oh, lor—oh, lor! whatebber shall become ob me? What a wicked ole man dis chile has been!"

Then again—

"I wish I nebber see de ship; I wish I may die 'f I don't. Oh, lor, lor—oh, lor! I such a wicked old man. Why de debble did I go and make lub to five, six oder women, when I got a wife at home? Oh, lor, oh, lor, whatebber will become ob me?"

'Thello reserved all his complaints till there were lulls in the awful roar, and then he passed the time crying like a child, and lamenting the wickedness of his past life.

"Oh, lor," he cried once; "I 'member how I nebber pay for quarter pound ob 'bacco. Oh, lor, I nebber meant to pay for it; and twice ober I help myself to one of Mass' Helston cigar, and smoke him affer de watch set, and nobody 'bout de deck. I nebber see such wicked ole man in my life as dis chile; and now I go to be burnt all up to cinder—roast—roast—roast! Oh, I can't stand him no how!"

But no one paid any heed to 'Thello's ravings, for the perils of self occupied each mind; and by degrees the loud sobbings and wailings that had prevailed gave way to a dull, apathetic state—the women sitting huddled together, after wildly rushing about in search of a means of escape, only to find that every step they took from the centre of the

hill only resulted in their bringing themselves more within the influence of the scorching lava.

Nothing could be seen of Helston and Grace, and the feeling grew momentarily more strong that they must have perished in the lava flood, Mary sitting down and sobbing violently for some time as she realized what she felt to have been the fearful end of poor Grace.

Then began 'Thello's complaints again, as he went on bemoaning his sins.

"I wish I nebber see no oder woman 't all, and dey wouldn't take notice of handsome colour genlum. It berry hard on poor man, and make him wicked when um wouldn't be. Oh, lor! oh, lor! I gib ebbpyting to be able to run away. Bodder de ship, I wish I nebber come."

Suddenly a wild shriek from one of the groups of women aroused Laurent, and he hurried with Mary to see what was the new peril.

It was very dark, but by the lurid glare he saw thirty or so hurriedly pressing away from something, and for the moment Laurent's heart sank.

"What is it?" gasped Mary.

"I fear the hill is being crumbled away by the molten lava," he said in her ear; "if so, dear, it is the beginning of the end."

But upon pushing his way through the affrighted crowd, it was to find that they were not alone upon the hill, for from a clump of scorched undergrowth, where it had taken refuge, a tremendous serpent, larger than any they had seen, had crept out, and was now gliding about in various directions, evidently seeking for a means of escape.

Laurent drew back, and thrust Mary amongst her companions; but though the serpent seemed to raise its head up menacingly, it soon became evident that the monster was in a state of abject fear, hurrying towards the hot lava and then darting back, its intent being to escape from the fiery ring in which it was confined; and it evidently looked upon those present with anything but inimical eyes.

Laurent had a hatchet in his belt, the only weapon of offence amongst the whole party; and he stood upon his guard, feeling, though, all the time, how inadequate it would be if the monster struck at him.

In the midst of such a scene of terror, the new peril seemed to add nothing to their position. In fact, to Laurent it seemed welcome, relieving him, as it did, from the terrible sense of depression consequent upon watching, hour by hour, the scorching lava, as, without doubt, it gradually rose inch by inch, and threatened the stability of their refuge.

The terrors of the women, however, had their effect upon him; and seeing at last that unless he acted, and did something to rid them of their fearsome companion, some of the poor creatures would in their dread rush frantically into the lava, he determined to assume the offensive, and grasping his axe, and without going near Mary, for fear she should try to dissuade him from his self-imposed task, he approached the serpent.

To attack such a monster in the midst of that ring of fire was a task before which some of the myths of classic lore look small; but Laurent approached the gliding monster cautiously, and with a firm determination in his eye.

It was still very dark, and this enabled him to approach the creature at first unheeded; but when he was pretty close, it ceased its gliding motion for a moment, and, raising its head, uttered a loud hiss.

Even then it seemed as if this was the serpent's way of expressing its dread; for, paying no more heed to the assailant, it glided hurriedly along, going as close to the lava flood as it dared, and then travelling onward in search of a means of escape.

"The monster is as much alarmed as we are," thought Laurent, and for a few moments he hesitated. "Why should I try to destroy its life?" he muttered. "In a few moments I may have to give up my own."

He stood watching the serpent; and then, as it glided quickly on, he followed it through the gloom, the frightened women shrieking, and fleeing to another part at its approach.

At last, after making the circuit of the place three or four times, the noise made by the women seemed to irritate it, and it became more excited, raising its head, darting it here and there, and hissing, angrily, a long, harsh hiss, very different to its former expression of fear.

It turned now, and seeing Laurent close behind, gathered itself up together, and then, launching out its anterior part, made a dash at the young man, one which he avoided by making a leap aside, when, instead of pursuing him once more, it continued its course towards where the women were clustered together, sending them shrieking away, and calling upon Laurent to protect them.

A few minutes before, and he had felt disposed to leave the creature unmolested, seeing safety in its fear; but now that it had shown a disposition to become an assailant there was nothing for it but to try and gain the mastery; and summoning his manhood to his aid, he determined to try and get a good cut at the monster, so as to partially disable it before it could touch him.

He hurried on then, when, to his horror, as the women fled, he saw Mary Dance, dimly defined in the gloom, standing alone; and as a lurid flash or two from the volcano pierced the clouds, the serpent turned suddenly, evidently saw her, and raised its head as it gathered itself together.

Seeing her danger, Mary turned and fled towards the scorching lava; and Laurent ran to throw himself between the monster and its victim, when something seemed to strike him violently on the side, driving him towards the lava; and the next instant, as if some one had struck at him with a mighty whip-lash, the coils of the serpent had enveloped him round and round, completely paralysing his arm, as the hatchet fell from his grasp.

PRESERVATION OF A FAVOURITE MINISTER.—A minister was called in to see a man who was very ill. After finishing his visit, as he was leaving the house, he said to the man's wife, "My good woman, do you not go to any church at all?" "Oh, yes, sir, we gang to the Barony Kirk." "Then why in the world did you send for me? Why didn't you send for Dr. Macleod?" "Na, na, sir, deed no; we wadna risk him. Do ye no ken it's a dangerous case o' typhus?"

Poachers at the Park.

"ONE guinea, sir! One pound one shilling does table." every pheasant cost me that I put upon my

"Don't believe you," I said to myself; and "Indeed!" I said aloud.

"Yes, sir. One guinea, sir; what with keepers, and feeding, and preserving, and all the rest of it. Expensive work, sir, to keep your covers full."

"Very, at that rate," I said.

And then I began to think about what Tawse, the head keeper, had told me about the cartloads of pheasants and hares that were sent up from the park to the poulterer's.

"The gunner makes a fine stocking out on 'em, sir," he said; "and he'd make a fine deal more if it wasn't for the portchers."

I mentally determined to have a chat with Tawse about it when my uncle had left me; and I continued my walk with him through the ferny copses, till he declared himself to be tired, and went in.

"You'll stop out a bit longer, sir, I suppose?"

"Yes, uncle," I said.

"You won't forget dinner, I presume, sir?"

"Oh, no," I replied; and we parted.

"A stingy old screw," I said to myself, as he took his gouty leg indoors. "If I had been Sir Roddery Langmead, or the Maharajah Song Singh, I might have shot pheasants till I was tired; but, just because I am his poor nephew, the game costs him a guinea a head, and I must not have a shot. Never mind; it will all be mine some day."

I strolled off into the wood, knowing pretty well where to find Tawse, the keeper; and, as I did so, the pheasants scurried off, or rose up with a whirr, uttering their discordant cries, while others could be heard uttering their calls, which always put me in mind of young cockerels making their first attempt to crow.

My path led me by the old oak, under whose shade the keeper was in the habit of feeding the pheasants, by scattering wheat and Indian corn; and, approaching cautiously, I caught a glimpse of several of the beauties.

It was towards evening, and half a dozen were seeking perches in the lower branches, while others were still picking about in a lazy, full-fed fashion, picking up a grain here and a grain there, just as often to let it fall again; one fat cock bird indolently lying in the dust, scuffling his wings about, and having a dry bath previous to seeking his rest.

My appearance startled them a little; but, as I drew back, they hardly moved; and I could not help thinking what an easy prey they would be for the poachers.

I had not gone five hundred yards before I caught a glimpse of Tawse's ruddy face and ruddier whiskers, as he came slowly along a forest path in brown velvet and leggings, his double gun under his arm, ready to bring down "warment," and Sloucher, the black retriever, at his heels.

"Ah, Master Jarge," he cried, his face brightening up. "Going to have a shot at the fezzans to-morrow?"

"No, Tawse," I said, sulkily. "The governor says they cost him a guinea apiece."

"Poof!" ejaculated Tawse. "Why, he makes 'undreds by 'em, sir; and if it warn't for the portchers he'd make 'undreds more."

"But do the poachers really come, Tawse? Now, tell the truth, or between ourselves as old friends—there, I won't split on you—is this a polite fiction of yours to make up for a few dozen of missing birds?"

"I don't know what you mean by p'lite fickshums, Master Jarge, but do 'em come arter the fezzans?"

"Yes, do the poachers come?"

"Night arter night, sir, and here's only me and Tom Brock on the estate; so what can we do? They dodges us, sir. Gets us out to Timble's Spinney, thinking they're coming theer; and, while we're watching one end of the preserves, they're bagging the fezzans at the t'other. But I'm down on 'em now."

"Are you?" I said. "How do you mean?"

Tawse looked all round carefully, and then, coming close up to me, he whispered—

"I'm going to do 'em, Master Jarge."

"But how?" I said.

"You come along o' me," he said, chuckling till he was black in the face. "Why not come out wi' Tom Brock and me and him to-night?"

"Nothing I should like better, Tawse," I said; "but who's 'him'?"

"Come along and see, sir. He's a wonner, he is. I bought him my own self, sir; and you shall come and make friends wi' him, and then I'll show you my dodge."

Tawse would give no explanation till we reached his cottage, where, taking a knife out of his cords, he cut two great slices off a piece of flesh stuck upon a hook; and then, furnishing me with one piece upon a fork, he led me to the back, where, chained to a prostrate barrel, which served him for a kennel, was the biggest and ugliest bull-dog I ever set eyes on.

No sooner did he set eyes on me than he wrinkled his black snub nose, showed all his teeth, and darted at me to the full extent of his chain, baying furiously the while.

"Down, Beauty," said Tawse, patting his head. "This here's the young master come to give you some grub. There, give him your paw."

That dog smiled at me directly, winked one eye, and then held up his paw for me to take, which I did, expecting a snarl and a snap for my pains, but Beauty was polite; and, when I held him out my peace-offering, he looked at it, but proceeded first to sniff me all round, when, apparently satisfied, he took the meat, lay down, and began to eat.

"Just give him a pat over, sir, and pull his ears," said Tawse. "You're all right now; he'd know you on the darkest night that ever was, wouldn't you, Beauty?"

The dog gave a whining yelp by way of answer; and, after I had patted him and felt his ears to order, he favoured me with a wag or two of his tail, and I followed Tawse into his cottage.

"Hallo!" I said, "bird stuffing?"

"Aint they good uns, sir?" said Tawse, chuckling,

as he stood with his head on one side admiring five stuffed pheasants lying upon the table on their sides, with long wires sticking out of their feet.

"Well, pretty well," I said. "They'd pass off for pheasants in the dark."

"Just exactly what they are to do, Master Jarge," he said, grinning. "That's my dodge. Them portchers is coming to-night to the Oakwood preserve, and I'm going to stick them five birds about on dead branches o' the big tree as you passed just afore I met you. Then, when them bla'guards is blazing away at the stuffed birds, I'm going to let Beauty go at 'em, while Tom Brock and me captivates all we can."

"I'll come and help you, Tawse," I said.

"Will you, sir? then you shall," cried the keeper, heartily. "Dick the groom's coming too, sir. You come along o' he at 'leven to-night to the swing gate, and give a low whistle, and I'll jyne you."

"Shall I bring a gun?" I said.

"Lor, no, sir. Bring one o' them truncheons as is hanging up in the hall from the deer's horns. Dick's got one a'ready."

"All right," I said.

And, it being nearly time, I hurried back to dinner.

The old gentleman little thought of what I was dreaming as he prosed over his port and told stories, till he went up to bed at half-past ten; and then, taking the butler into my confidence, I slipped out, to find Dick, a stout young fellow, waiting for me by the stable yard; and then, in ample time, we started for the swing gate, about half a mile from the house.

I had secured the truncheon, and placed its leathern loop over my wrist, while on turning to Dick, I found that he was armed with a similar weapon.

"They hits hard, sir, and don't go off," he said, with a chuckle, as we walked down the side path leading to the wood.

It was a dark, soft night, with no prospect of the moon being up for three hours; and to make it more suitable for our project, the stars were veiled by thick dark clouds that portended rain.

"How do you feel, Dick?" I said.

"Oh, right enough, sir," he replied. "I don't care so long as they don't use guns."

"They won't dare," I said.

"Well, I don't know. The last keeper as was here was shot dead, and one on the next estate, Captain Bulkeley's, was shot down, and never was the same man again."

"Look here, master Dick," I cried, stopping short, "are you saying these pleasant things to frighten me?"

"No, sir, honour bright! It's true as true. You ask Tawse. Here he is."

In effect just then a dark figure came slowly out of the shade, followed by a dog, and I recognized the keeper, with a big bludgeon in his hand.

"Hush! don't say a word about the shooting," I whispered to Dick. Then, aloud, "Well, Tawse, where's Tom Brock?"

"Don't talk so loud, sir. He's just under yon tree. Come along, and we'll get into hiding."

Just then Beauty came up and smelt me all round

again, finishing off by giving his ear a rub against my hand in token of friendship, as we followed the keeper into the wood.

"I stuck up the stuffed fezzans, sir," he whispered; "and I've heerd as they're a-coming for sure. Now, I've put down an old sack for you to kneel on, and we shall hide close by. Don't take no notice of nothing till I give the word, and then seize your man. If he shows fight, bring your truncheon down on his head hard. Don't you be afraid, sir—portchers is the biggest cowards out. They knows as they're a-doing wrong, and are in a mortal blue stoo all the time."

"All right, Tawse," I said.

And we made our way close up to the big oak tree, where, standing out clear against the dim sky line, I could see a couple of pheasants.

"Stuffed uns, sir," said Tawse, chuckling.

And then he led me to a bush, behind which a sack was doubled up, and there I knelt down. He placed Dick and Tom Brock on the other side of the tree, and then came and crouched down close by me, the dog, at his command, thrusting its head inside his coat, and making itself snug for the time being.

"Will he be quiet?" I whispered.

"Yes, sir, as a mouse," said Tawse. "He won't move till I tell him. And now, sir, asking your pardon for being so bold, just you take a good grip of your staff, be ready, and give your tongue a holiday; for they may come in two minutes, as like as in two hours."

Two hours! And in that damp wood. Fortunately, at five and twenty, one don't think much about rheumatism, so I settled down patiently to wait, the excitement keeping me warm; and for quite two hours, saving the occasional hoot of an owl, or the rustle of some pheasant on its perch, we did not hear a sound.

Suddenly, just as I had made up my mind to leave them to it, there was the sharp crack of a twig broken by the pressure of a foot.

Tawse laid his hand upon my arm, and the next moment we heard whispers and then rustling.

Then came two distinct reports of a gun fired, evidently at a long distance off.

Tawse placed his lips close to my ear—

"That's their dodge, sir," he whispered. "They've sent a man down to Hemlock Spinney to fire shots. Then they think I shall go there; so they'll wait ten minutes, and begin here. They're wrong this time."

Tawse was quite right; for at the end of about a quarter of an hour there was a shot about fifty yards from us, and then another and another, followed by rustling amongst the trees and dull thuds on the ground.

"They're murdering the poor birds pretty well," I thought; and a feeling of exasperation seized me as I thought of how I was debarred from the sport while these cowardly rascals came and did as they pleased by night.

My thoughts were interrupted by the trampling of feet, and a voice said, hoarsely—

"Here, bring along the sack, Bill."

The next minute I could see five or six men force their way through the bushes, and into the little open place in front of the big tree, where they stood peer-

ing about, with Dick and Brock on one side of them, Tawse and me on the other.

My wonder was that the dog kept still; but it did not move even when one of the poachers said, roughly—

"Now, lads, here they are; look alive, or we shall have old Tawse back."

"Wouldn't be lucky for him if he showed his ugly face here," said another.

Bang!—bang!—bang!—bang! went four guns.

"Struth, look at that now," said one of the men. "Are you all blind?"

Bang!—bang! went a couple more guns, and no birds fell; but a derisive laugh rose from the four men who had fired, and were now loading.

"Now," shouted Tawse. "Seize 'm, boy."

There was a rush, a loud, baying roar from Beauty's throat, and I saw him bound at one of the men, but I saw no more then; for I had leaped at one of the scoundrels and collared him: but only to receive a blow from the butt of a gun which sent me staggering back into the bushes.

Perhaps I was a little bit afraid before then, and I certainly should have hesitated to use my staff; but as I gathered myself up, with my mouth full of blood, and a sensation on me that every tooth in my gums had been knocked loose, I rushed at the first man I saw, just as he had raised his gun by the barrel to strike at Dick from behind, and gave him such a topper that he went down like a stone, and I felt sure that I had killed him.

Meanwhile a desperate struggle was going on. I had placed one scoundrel *hors de combat*. Beauty had got another down on his back, and was holding him, howling with dread; and now another fellow attacked me.

I saw that the numbers were now equal, just getting a glimpse of Tawse, Brock, and Dick, engaged each with an enemy, when I had to give way before the savage onslaught of my adversary, till, stepping back to avoid a blow he aimed at me with his gun, I tripped over a bramble, and fell.

Just as I was struggling I heard a hoarse voice roar out—

"Stand off, or I'll fire!"

"You're not loaded, mate," was the mocking reply.

And Dick made a dash at the man who was holding him at bay.

There was a loud explosion, a groan—Dick staggered back, turned round, and then fell heavily; when there was a pause, followed by a rush of feet. The poachers had taken to flight.

"They've killed the poor lad," groaned Tawse, rushing forward. Then, recovering himself, he cried, "Hold that fellow that's down, Tom. Here, hi, Beauty, fetch another, boy—another."

The dog left his prostrate enemy, uttered a yelp, and rushed off through the wood; and the next minute there was a yell and a struggle, accompanied by a worrying noise.

"He's got him," muttered Tawse; "and he'll hold him till we go. Are you hurt, sir?"

"Not much," I said, coming up. "But poor Dick?"

"He's bleeding awful from the shoulder, sir," he

whispered. "Good lord, what a sight! Give's your handkerchy, sir. I'm afraid there's murder done."

We tried hard to staunch the wound, but with only poor success, and then Tawse started to his feet.

"It's only half a mile to the cottage, sir. I'll get him on my back, and trot down. Will you make for the village, and fetch the doctor?"

I was off as soon as he had spoken, running, but feeling very dizzy, and nearly falling over the prostrate figure of a man, with Beauty lying on his chest.

"Here, call off your dawg," the fellow cried, as I passed.

But I did not stop, only ran for the park gate, and then along the lane to the village, where it was quite half an hour before I could get the doctor awake, dressed, and following me.

"For heaven's sake, make haste, sir," I cried as we strode along.

"Doctors should never be in haste, sir," was the reply. "Our success depends on our coolness."

I got him to the keeper's cottage at last, and there found poor Dick lying perfectly insensible, examination showing that the charge had passed right through his shoulder, making a ghastly rent; but after the requisite dressing, he seemed to rally.

By this time the one policeman stationed in the village was up at the cottage, and we left the doctor watching his patient, while Tawse, the constable, and I went to see how Tom Brock and Beauty were getting on with the prisoners.

On reaching the site of the affray, we became aware of the odour of tobacco smoke; and from out of the darkness there was the dull glow of a pipe.

Tom Brock was seated very comfortably on the prostrate man's chest, smoking peaceably; but on our approaching, he growled—

"Aint sorry you've come. He've been swearing awful, and promising me the knife."

"Ha!" said the constable, "then he shall have the bracelets."

There was a click, click, and the man's wrists were secured; when the policeman flashed his lantern into his face.

"Oho, Shammy Thomson, so you're caught at last! Swore an *alibi* last time, and that you never meant poaching. Well, it's a hanging case for you this time."

"Is he dead?" hissed the poacher. "It warn't me as fired the shot—it was Sol Searby. He said he'd shoot anybody as tried to take him."

"Yes," said Tawse—"I believe it was Sol Searby. But, come along; Beauty has spotted another. Beau—ty! Beau—ty!"

There was a low growl from the direction where I had left the dog, followed by the noise of a struggle and worrying, with the voice of a man swearing savagely.

We ran up, to find that Beauty's prisoner was up, and trying to escape; but the dog was holding on tightly to his arm, in spite of blows rained upon him, as the poacher dragged him along.

"There, you may give in," cried the policeman.

But the fellow made a desperate effort to escape, getting free, and coming my way; but I threw my arms round him, and we fell together.

The next minute the fellow's hands were secured

behind him, and he was dragged up, Beauty fastening on to his leg, but resigning his hold at a word from his master.

"Sol Searby, eh?" said the policeman, making his lantern play on the savage, distorted features. "We've got the right man, then; and I think I can put my fingers on the rest of the gang."

Saying which, he marched off his prisoner, coupled the two together, and early that morning they were safe in the cells of the police station at the nearest town, where they were soon afterwards joined by the other four of the gang—for the constable did know where to lay his finger upon the rest.

Poor Dick lay at death's door for a month, and then rallied, youth and a healthy constitution pulling him through; while our six friends had to undergo sentences varying from fourteen years to a twelve-month's imprisonment.

"And serve 'em right, sir," said Tawse to me; "for what I says to him as defends portchers, and says they only shoots wild critters, is this: Fezzans aint wild critters at all; and if gents didn't preserve them, and hares, and pattridges, there would be none. Fezzans has to be reared and fed like chickens, and them as portches 'em is as bad as chicken stealers. They cost a deal, do fezzans."

"Guinea a-head, do they, Tawse?" I said.

"Not they, sir. But you are going to have a day or two?"

"As many as I like, Tawse," I replied. "The old gentleman was very pleased about the poacher catching. But you don't think they cost him a guinea a-piece?"

"Guinea a-piece, sir? Gammon!"

An Eight-footed Thief.

THE leading card in aquaria has hitherto been the octopus, or the devil-fish. Upon this creature "of fiction and of fact" Mr. Henry Lee has written a most interesting little work—to which we have great pleasure in referring for a second article upon this singular creature—containing much that he has gleaned by personal observation in the Brighton Aquarium. This animal has been lately so fully and frequently described, as scarcely to need repetition. Some of its peculiarities are, however, not so well known, as they have only been developed by the aid of aquaria.

It was found that some young lump-fish (*Cyclopterus lumpus*) were mysteriously disappearing from one of the tanks in the Brighton Aquarium. Almost daily there was a fresh and inexplicable vacancy in the gradually diminishing family circle, and morning after morning a handbill might have been issued—

"Missing!—Lost, stolen, or strayed, a young lump-sucker, rather below the middle size, and enormously stout; had on a bright red coat, with several rows of buttons on it, and a waistcoat of lighter colour. Whoever will give such information as shall lead to the discovery of the same, or produce satisfactory evidence of its death, will relieve the troubled minds of the curators!"

What on earth could have become of them?

Where could they be? If they had died they would have been found in the tank, for there were no crabs there that could have eaten them; they could not have burrowed in the shingle, for it was not deep enough; and, with their obesity of form, they could no more have leaped out of the tank than Mr. Wardell's fat boy in "Pickwick" could have jumped a five-barred gate.

Here was a puzzle! One by one they were lost to sight, as regularly and unaccountably as pair after pair of Lieutenant Charles Seaforth's breeches disappeared from his bed-room at Tappington, as related in the "Ingoldsby Legends."

One morning, however, one of the staff, on going to count our young friends, found an interloper amongst them.

"Who put an octopus in the lump-fish tank?"

No one, of course.

"Well, then, if he hasn't bin and got over out of the next tank!"

And this was the fact.

The night-marauding villain had occasionally issued from the water in his tank, and clambered up the rocks, and over the wall into the next one. There he had helped himself to a young lump-fish, and, having devoured it, returned demurely to his own quarters by the same route, with well-filled stomach and contented mind.

His return homeward, generally at daybreak, was caused by no intelligent fear of the keeper, but a perfectly natural instinct, inherited from his ancestors, of retiring during the day to his own favourite den or lurking-place, as an ogre is supposed to ensconce himself in his castle or cavern after having satiated his rapacious maw in a successful foray. In the case of detection he had evidently overgorged himself, and gone to sleep, instead of wisely going home to bed.

Had he not been caught thus, this little episode in his history and the loss of his neighbours would have remained a mystery.

The incident was suggestive, and Mr. Lee, ever ready to profit by circumstances, watched for many nights. So acute, however, are the octopods in their perceptions, so quick of sight, and so sensitive to the light of even a distant lantern, that the suspected pirate would not stir on a buccaneering expedition whilst any one was cruising in the building. He seemed to know that he was watched, and for about a week remained quietly at home. During that time he may have dreamed of lump-fish, but none were missing. Then he again broke bounds, and, moreover, prevailed on one of his companions to follow his bad example.

One night these two truants left their tank and started in opposite directions on a voyage of discovery; and as, if missing, they might be looked for in the next tank, each crossed his nearest neighbour's abode, and settled down amongst the tribes beyond. One of them found himself in a Brobdingnag of crabs—a colony of giants too strong to be successfully invaded even by an armada of octopods. If he had arrived at Lilliput instead—a tank inhabited by pigmy crustaceans—he would soon have depopulated it, by clutching in his hateful embrace more victims *per diem* than ever an unwelcome,

foul-mouthed dragon of old demanded as his daily dole of youths and maidens.

The other precious nocturnal prowler found his way into Lobsterdom, and, putting on a bold front, proceeded to attack the chief. The lobster, though evidently alarmed, "showed fight," and the intruder was obliged to retreat, and seek refuge in a cranny in the rock-work.

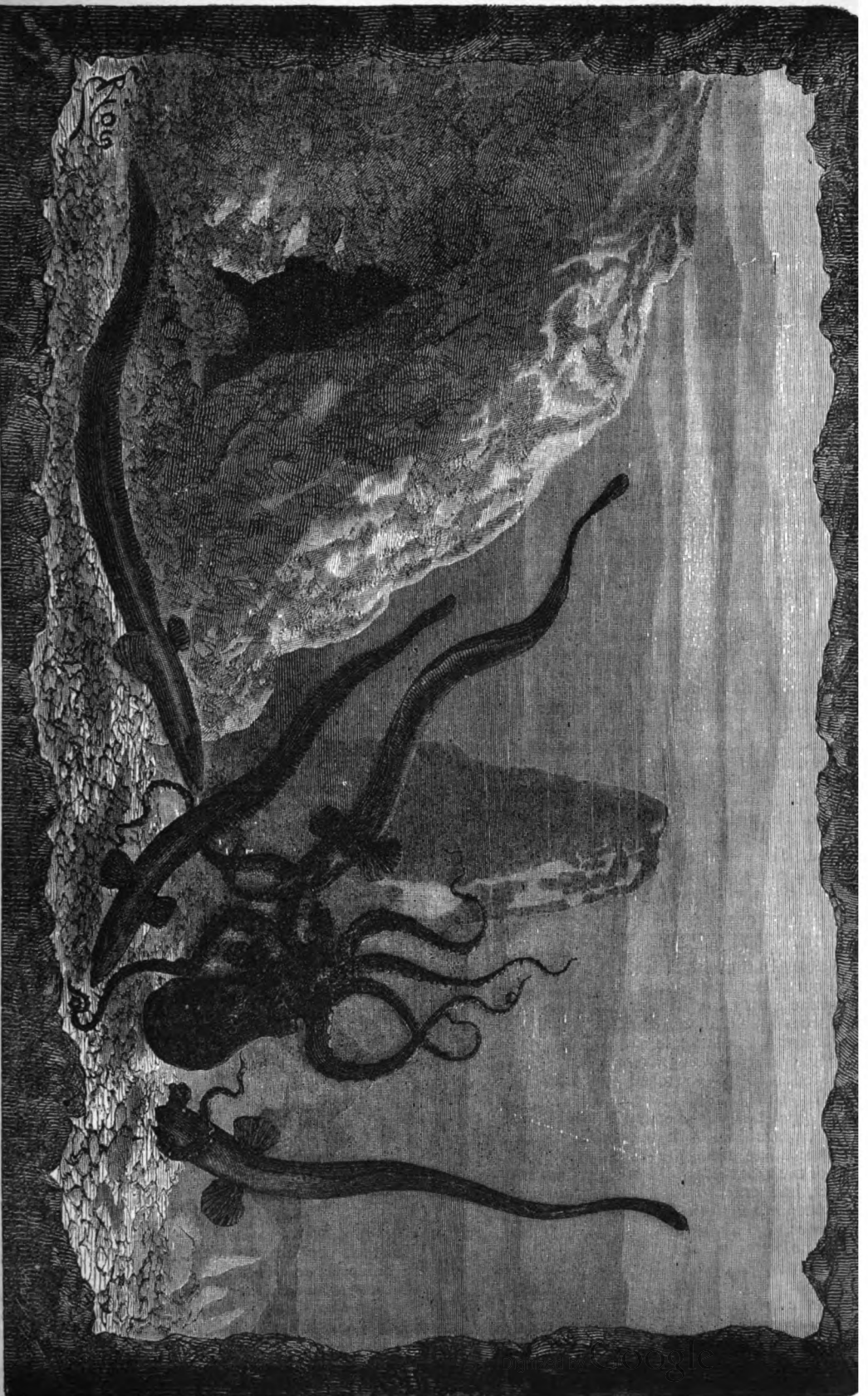
Those who witnessed this encounter were surprised that the invader did not attack the smaller lobsters, it being an old notion, still generally believed by fishermen, that if an octopus approaches a "pot" or trap in which are lobsters, they will cast off their claws with fright, thus leaving something like ransom for their lives.

The action of the octopus, when seizing its prey for its necessary food, is very like that of a cat pouncing on a mouse, and holding it down beneath its paws. The movement is as sudden, the scuffle as brief, and the escape of the prisoner even less probable.

The fate of the crab is not really more terrible than the fate of the mouse, or of a minnow swallowed by a perch. But there is a repulsiveness about the form, colour, long gaunt sucker-covered arms, and attitude of the captor, which invests it with a kind of tragic horror.

Animals purely swimmers, and which hunt and overtake their prey by speed, would be impeded by having to drag after them a bundle of lengthy appendages trailing heavily astern; but a long reach of arm is an advantage, instead of a hindrance, to the octopus. For although it can swim on occasion, its ordinary habit is either to rest suspended to the side of a rock, to which it clings with the suckers of several of its arms, or to remain lurking in some favourite cranny—its body thrust for protection and concealment well back in the interior of the recess; its bright eyes keenly on the watch, three or four of its limbs firmly attached to the walls of its hiding-place—the others gently waving, gliding, and feeling about in the water, as if to maintain its vigilance, and keep itself always on the alert, and in readiness to pounce on any unfortunate wayfarer that may pass his den. To small fish, crustacean, or mollusc, the slightest contact with even one of those lithe arms is fatal. Instantaneously, as pull of trigger brings down a bird, or touch of electric wire explodes a torpedo or a mining fuse, the pistons of the series of suckers are simultaneously drawn inwards, the air is removed from the pneumatic holders, and a vacuum created in each. The victim strives to escape. A further retraction of the central part of the disc makes all secure, and as arm after arm, containing a perfect mitrailleuse of inverted air-guns, takes horrid hold, battery after battery of them is brought to bear, and the pressure of the air is so great that nothing can effect the relaxation of their retentive power but the destruction of the natural air-pump which works them, or the closing of the throttle valve by which they are connected with it.

Bathers who get entangled in its embraces should grasp it by the neck, which compels it at once to let go, as it cancels the powers of the creature to work the suckers.



"TORN AWAY FROM THE BODY OF THE VICTIM."—(Page 294.)

Mr. Lee, desiring to have a better view than he had previously been able to obtain of the action which follows the seizure of a crab by an octopus, fastened a crab to a string, by which it was lowered into the tank close to the glass, whilst Mr. Lee stood watching it. The crab had barely descended to the depth of two feet before an octopus, for which it was not intended, shot out like a rocket, opened his membranous umbrella, shut up the suspended crab within it, and darted back to the ledge of rock. There he held on, with the crab firmly pressed between his body and the stonework. As this was not what was wished, the attendant was directed quietly to try and pull the bait away from him. As soon as the creature felt the strain, he took a firm grasp of the rock with all the suckers of seven of his arms, and, stretching the eighth aloft, coiled it round the tautened line, the suckers actually closing on the line also, as a caterpillar's foot grips a thin twig. Noticing from below several jerks on the string, it was thought they were given by the man overhead, but the man declared that the creature was pulling so hard that he must either let go or the line would break. Tug-tug, dragged the tough, strong arm of the octopus; and at the third tug the line broke, and the crab was all his own. The twine was that used for seine nets, and was, therefore, not particularly weak.

Although this experiment furnished a fresh illustration of the holding power and strength of an octopus, which can carry an oyster heavier than itself up almost perpendicular rockwork and round angles, it had not obtained that which was wanted. The spectator wished to be underneath that umbrella with the crab, and able to see what happened there. The plan, therefore, was to procure the seizure of the crab against the front glass.

A second crab was, therefore, so fastened that the string could be withdrawn if desired, and was lowered near to a great male octopus, who generally dwelt in a cave. He was sleepy, and not very hungry, and required a great deal of tempting to rouse him to activity. But the sight of his favourite food overcame his laziness, and, after some demonstrative panting, puffing, and erection of his tubercles, he lunged out an arm to seize the precious morsel. It was withdrawn from his reach. And so, at last, he turned out of bed, rushed at it, and got it under him against the glass case, just as was desired.

In a second the crab was completely pinioned; not a movement nor a struggle was visible or possible. Each leg, each claw was grasped all over by suckers—enfolded in them—stretched out to its full extent by them. Thus, the abdominal plates of the crab were dragged towards the mouth, the black top of the hard, parrot-like beak was seen for a single instant protruding from the circular orifice in the centre of the radiation of the treacherous arms, and the next, had crushed through the shell, and was buried deep in the flesh of the victim!

However, the octopus gives as well as takes. There is no better bait for the larger predatory fishes than a portion of one of its arms. Some of the cetacea are very fond of them, and whales when struck have been known to disgorge portions of the arms of these cuttle-fish.

In the conger, the smaller octopods find a most formidable and victorious foe. The eel either makes a meal at once of him, or if its body is not got-atable in his hiding-places in the clefts of the rocks, will bite off as much of his legs as he can get at. The frequent mutilated condition in which the octopus is met with may thus be accounted for without referring these dismemberments to the wilful act of the octopus itself.

The attack by a conger upon the octopus is thus graphically described by the curator of the Havre Aquarium:—

"As soon as the octopus touched the bottom of the conger tank into which it was placed, it examined every corner of the stone-work. The moment it perceived a conger it seemed to feel instinctively the danger which menaced it, and endeavoured to conceal its presence by stretching itself along a rock, the colour of which it immediately assumed. Finding this useless, and seeing that it was discovered, it changed its tactics, and shot backwards, in quick retreat, leaving behind it a long black trail of turbid water, formed by the discharge of its ink. Then it fixed itself to a rock, with all its arms surrounding and protecting its body, and presenting on all sides a surface covered with suckers. In this position it awaited the attack of its enemies.

"A conger approached, searched with its snout for a vulnerable place, and, having found one, seized with his teeth a mouthful of the living flesh. Then, straightening itself out in the water, it turned round and round with giddy rapidity until the arm was, with a violent wrench, torn away from the body of the victim. Each bite of the conger cost the unfortunate creature a limb, and at length nothing remained but its dismembered body, which was finally devoured; some dog-fishes, attracted by the fray, partaking of the feast."

With all the savage and remorseless attributes ascribed to the octopus by fable and by fact, she is an excellent mother. After depositing her curious string of eggs, she, week after week, continues to attend to them with the most watchful care, seldom leaving them for an instant, except to take food.

This amiable trait in the octopus' character reminds us of an anecdote told by Lavender, the Bow-street runner, as the police detectives were then termed.

"What are you crying for, Jack, in that way, with your head agin the wall, washing all the blessed mortar out between the bricks?" asked one boy of another, in a back slum.

"For father—O—o—oh!" sobbed the mourner.

"For your father!—don't cry for him, Jack; he was a terrible old thief."

"Yes, yes—I knows he was a precious old thief," replied the affectionate son, still on full blubber; "but he was a jolly good father."

MALAY RIVERS AND OYSTERS.—At their mouths these rivers are fringed with mangrove bushes, on which oysters cast their spat; and at the mouth of the Muar our party enjoyed a rare feed of "natives" without any of the penalties attaching to cannibals.

Among the Icebergs.

CHAPTER XX.

I GREW so sure at last, from the little time the men were gone, that I spoke to Captain Pash and Mr. Solly, when they were together one day.

"Well, my dear," the former said, rubbing his ear, "I believe you are about right; for the men say that some one told them that as long as they went out a little way, that was all they need do, and they were glad enough to catch at the chance."

"And that was Stephen Ellerby," I exclaimed, angrily.

"Well, my dear, not to tell an untruth about it, it was."

"And you have remained passive, and allowed this to go on," I cried, bitterly. "Oh, if I had but a man's strength!"

"But, my dear pet, look how it is," he exclaimed.

"Captain Pash, it stands like this," I cried—"that you, as stout-hearted men, vowed that you would do all that you possibly could to search out the place where these poor fellows are waiting for help; but, like the crew, you listen to a few prejudiced words, wherein some one tells you that it is all in vain, and that all you have to do is to make a show to quiet me, and then that is enough. Is it not so?"

"Well, well, well, my dear—"

"Captain Pash, has not Stephen Ellerby told you that it is not necessary to trouble the men to any extent?"

The captain hesitated, and stumbled about in his speech, and rubbed his ear again, when Mr. Solly roughly thrust his elbow into his side, and growled out—

"Why don't you be honest for once in a way? That's about what it was, Miss Jessie. He did say something of the kind, though not in them words; and you know, seeing what it is up here—for as we couldn't help thinking that the poor fellows, God rest 'em, must have— There, don't cry, please; you know what I mean. And look here, my dear, it will be hard work for us all to get through the winter as it is; and we can't be too careful, if we mean to get back again."

"Are you men—are you men?" I cried, passionately. Here, perhaps only a few miles away, are those poor creatures asking your aid, and you withhold it. Is it not cruel to bring help so near, and then to keep it back?"

"There, bless your heart, my dear," said Captain Pash, "I'll make a clean breast of it. We have been holding back lately for you—there really is no chance now; and if—"

"How can you—how dare you turn so cowardly!" I cried, through my tears, for a hot sense of indignation seemed to choke me. "Oh, Captain Pash, I did trust to you."

"Say you will again, my pretty—say you will again; and he may come and beg and pray of me, and I won't run back again. There, we'll hold out, won't we, Solly, and search every mile of ground, find 'em or not, won't we?"

"Ay, ay, lad, we will—that we will; and who knows but what we may find them after all, eh?"

"Ah, who knows, my lad?" said Captain Pash. "There, my lass, there's my hand on it once more; and if I turn back again, tell me of it."

"And there's mine, Miss Jessie; and if you give your orders to-morrow, here we are, and we'll do 'em—eh, skipper?"

"That we will," was the hearty response.

And, more at ease in my mind, I watched them leave the cabin, and then sat thinking.

I could see it all plainly enough, that while appearing to work for me, Stephen Ellerby was energetic in foiling my wishes. What should I do, then; accuse him of it, and speak to the men?

I was afraid to attempt it; for although I had great influence with the captain and mate, and with old Brunyee, I doubted my power further, and shrank from any open demonstration which should compel me to speak to him.

I knew that I was ungrateful; but what could I do? I owed my life to Stephen; but would I not rather have died than have taken it at his hands, knowing full well as I did what was the reward he sought?

Should I appeal to him?

What would be the result? He would pretend acquiescence with my wishes, profess his willingness to aid, and all the while force matters so that they should turn out to suit his own ends.

The next day, at my wish, preparations were made for a long hunting and searching expedition; and I spoke to Captain Pash, asking him if it was not possible that I might go with them—expecting, of course, a negative; but no, he expressed his willingness, and, to my great joy, I found that I was to have a little sledge at my disposal—one to be drawn by six of the men—whenever I felt too fatigued to walk further.

The question of Ann going was settled in the negative on the instant, and I was to be the only woman of the party.

"I'll take care of her, old girl," the captain said to Mrs. Pash, as half in tears she, poor kind-hearted soul, helped to make of me a huge bundle of furs and wrappers; and soon after, with the moon shining brilliantly, the dogs barking and eager to be off, we started away, across the waste of ice and snow, to reach the other side of the great bay.

The ship soon grew indistinct, and was lost amidst the piled-up fragments, many of which were double its own size; and as the ice here was made level by the vast amount of snow that had fallen, our journey was tolerably smooth as we went on, hour after hour, the men talking little, but evidently cheerful and light-hearted, for they had been confined for some days between decks. Now a little excitement arose from the fact of the tracks of reindeer having been seen; but there was no success to attend the hunters on that day, and at last a sheltered place was selected, the tent we carried pitched, lamps lighted, and tea made, when a refreshing meal was partaken of; and in spite of the fearful cold, we rested and slept in security, a portion of the little tent having been set apart for my use, and the lamp well trimmed with fat, placed burning in it, to give me what little warmth it could shed.

Onward the next day, still skirting the shores of

the bay—though, save for the greater elevation, all might have been sea—and still no success. The captain—to encourage me, I believe—kept telling me that, after all, he thought that sooner or later, if we persevered, we should find the *Dawn* frozen in, so conspicuous an object being hardly likely to be passed unnoticed.

But four days passed—four days of mental and real darkness—and still no success, when the dogs were turned in the direction of the *Ice Blink*.

I had not suffered much from the cold; for, after the first night, I had made better friends with two of the dogs, who on each succeeding night shared with me my portion of the tent, poor faithful beasts! lending me their warmth as well as protection—henceforth my body-guard.

It was a singularly uneventful journey, and to one less sanguine might have been depressing; but now I felt that I was growing inured to the rigor of the climate, and I was eager to attempt another journey. I was not disheartened, only satisfied that so much of the rugged coast line had been carefully examined—now we must go in another direction.

“And will you try it again, little one?” said Captain Pash.

“Yes—why not?” I said. “I know it is hard on those brave fellows who draw the sledge; but with that help I can travel, I am sure, for days.”

“And so you shall,” he said; “and in a week’s time we will set off again.”

A week’s time! It seemed long, indeed, for we had been back two days; but the dogs needed recruiting, and, though I did not break down, the task had been most exhausting, and I was obliged to own that to be successful rest must be had; so, with a sigh, I sat on, hour after hour, with Mrs. Pash and Ann, making or mending our fur clothing, helping to prepare food for our next journey, or taking my turn in reading, or in the amusements that were indulged in, to beguile the monotony of that awful night of months.

For it was now fast approaching mid-winter; the weeks and months had glided slowly by with the same sad monotony, but so far we were blessed with health, and those who went upon the hunting expeditions secured for us a tolerably plentiful supply of fresh provisions.

My wishes were studied, and again an expedition was made, Stephen Ellerby this time not scrupling to oppose it as mad and unnecessary, such as must result in the loss of life, till he caught my indignant look, when he was silent; and, as if only too ready to give way to my wishes, he bowed his head and watched for an opportunity for speaking to me alone.

I avoided it as long as I could, but it was impossible to elude him long, situated as we were in that little vessel; and I was surprised, directly after our midday meal, by his appearance just at a time when Ann and Mrs. Pash were in another part of the vessel.

“You are angry with me, Miss Wynne,” he said, without prelude. “You are annoyed because I oppose these journeys. Do you not know why I do so?”

I was silent, and he went on—

“I tell you,” he exclaimed, passionately—“I tell

you—as you must know, if you have a woman’s heart—it is because I dread lest ill should befall you. Have you no compassion yet—can you not see how patiently I bear with all this search—this fearful risk? Surely, now, it is time there was an end of it. You propose, now, searching to the west. I tell you that which I have not told you before—I myself have searched all along that coast for miles and miles. For your sake, dearest Jessie, I went there alone; and it is useless for you to go—it is unnecessary for you to run fresh risks. Pray, pray, now, be ruled and stay; give up this quest, and rest content that all that is possible has been done.”

I tried not to answer, but he pressed me. He caught my hand between his, and held it tightly.

“I will not leave it till you promise me that you will give up now the quest. Dear Jessie,” he cried, beseechingly, “is there never to be an end to this? Have you no pity for me?”

Yes, I had pity for him, and at times I mistrusted myself; but I fought against my weakness, for at such times there was that longing, appealing gaze directed at me; and now once again I drew my hand hastily away.

I did not speak, there was no need to; for as he saw my repugnance plainly written in my face, with an oath he gave way to his ungovernable rage, and struck me sharply with the back of his hand upon the cheek.

The blow was sharp, but it seemed to give me pleasure; and though I could not avoid a cry of pain, the next moment there was a smile upon my face, for that act of his seemed to absolve me from the weak feelings of gratitude towards one who had striven ever to counteract my endeavours to save poor Mark.

He saw the smile, and with a snarl that was almost wolfish, he caught me rudely in his arms, and held me, in spite of my struggles.

I knew that I had but to cry out to bring a dozen to my assistance, so that I did not feel so much alarmed; but I tried not to scream, so as to avoid witnesses to this painful scene, and still struggling hard, I used every effort to free myself.

“Struggle away!” he hissed in my ear; “but I am the stronger, and you shall see that I am the stronger in this ship, too, my little queen. Look here, Jessie: I have toiled for you, pleaded to you, been your slave—now I will be master; and the day shall come when these little arms shall circle round my despised neck, and you shall ask for them to be allowed to stay there. As for this cursed Grant, he’s dead, I tell you—frozen stiff and stark—and dead a year or two ago; but were he living, I’d kill him a hundred times before he should lay finger on you, and call you his wife. Look here—once for all, are we to be friends or enemies? For your sake I’ve come to this cursed hell of ice, and even with my blood freezing, my heart beats warmly for you. Tell me, once for all, will you give up these mad quests, and be friends? I will forgive all, and I will ask to be forgiven.”

“Am I to cry for help, Mr. Ellerby?” I panted.

“If you like,” he cried, harshly—“if you wish to have the satisfaction of letting the sailors see you in my arms. Ay, struggle away, you took a wild step

when you trusted yourself out here—as good as alone. Cry, if you like, and let them see—let them make remarks; the poor fellows are dull enough, it will afford them amusement. How do you know that they are not already making remarks about your strange behaviour in trusting yourself out here without a husband's protection?"

"Because I came under the protection of true men," I cried, scornfully, anger mastering my fear. "Pish!" he ejaculated. "But, once more, are we to be friends or foes?"

"Foes!" I cried, struggling fiercely now, for he was straining me to his breast, and I could feel his hot breath upon my cheek. "Loose me—let me go, Stephen Ellerby, or I will be weak enough to shriek for help. We are not alone here."

"No," he said, savagely; "but the time may come when we are. You are proud now; you may some day be humble, and beg for my pity. Perhaps then you'll ask it in vain."

As he spoke, I don't know how it was, but I struggled free from him, and darted to the other side of the cabin, to stand panting and defiant, while he was once more cold and bitter.

"Foes be it, then," he said. "I am your enemy, then, Jessie Wynne, till you come and beg me to be your friend."

The next minute, I was alone in the cabin, to throw myself upon one of the lockers, sobbing bitterly, for I was once more the trembling, weak woman.

I did not see Ann enter, but I felt her on her knees by my side, kissing and fondling me, and trying to assuage my sorrow.

"There, don't tell me," she said. "I know what it all means. I saw him come away. Oh, if he would only go out and get froze to death, or lose his toes, or his tongue, or something, so that we could be free of him, for I hate him, that I do! But there, don't cry, Miss Jessie. Don't give way. Perhaps to-morrow, who knows, something may turn up."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE next morning came to see the preparations in the cabin once more busily going on. Mrs. Pash, as she kissed me, tried to persuade me not to go.

"You know, my darling, Pash and Solly will search every scrub just as well, or better, without you."

"Don't, please, try to dissuade me," I said. "Think, if you lost him—what would you do?"

"I'd go down on my hands and knees, and crawl all over the world, my darling, that I would," said the stout old dame. "Do you think I should have come here, up in this horrible cold place, if I hadn't loved him better than ever man was loved yet?"

"Then," I said, smiling, "can you not feel for me?"

"There, go along, you little witch," she cried, holding me tight, though, in her arms. "I do believe you do just what you like with us. Make haste and find him and marry him, and let's get home again to where I'll never call winter cold again after this."

I had just turned from Mrs. Pash, who looked

nearly as broad as she was long, wrapped up as she was, when Captain Pash entered, white with the frost.

"Here's a bad job for us, my little lass," he said, in his rough, hearty way.

A cold chill, such as no frost could give, shot through me, and I could not speak; but my appealing looks brought explanation from the captain's lips.

"The dogs—all six are dead, my pretty."

"Dead?" I said, trembling violently; for, while I felt that one means of search was taken from us, a terrible suspicion was struggling for entrance to my breast.

"Yes, dead. We missed them from the deck this morning, and thought, perhaps, they had broken out to go after a bear that had been prowling round us in the night; but when we came to call them, and shout, there was no yelp in reply, and there the poor brutes lay about a hundred yards from the ship—one here, and one there, and all dead."

"Frozen?" I asked, almost in a whisper.

"P'isoned," said a rough voice; and, turning sharply, there stood Brunyee.

"May be—may not be," said Captain Pash; "but the poor brutes are dead."

The hot tears started from my eyes, for there were two dear friends amongst those dogs—two true-hearted brutes who had been my solace on several of the journeys we had made—and, with Brunyee's words to endorse my thoughts, I felt sure that it was the dastardly act of an enemy to stay us from further search.

"And now, I suppose, we had better put off to-day's journey westward, eh?" said the captain.

"No," I said; "why should we? Our distances must be less, but still we can go."

"There," cried old Brunyee, "I know I aint no business here, only I come for furs, but I can't help speaking. Only you take command of ship, Miss Jessie, and I'm one of your crew."

"As you will, my dear," said Captain Pash. "Dogs or no dogs, we'll go, and good luck go with us; but all the same, I don't see what the poor brutes could have eaten to poison themselves."

Brunyee had left the cabin, so I forebore to speak, and, following him upon deck, I saw, by the light of the swinging lanterns, that the men were hurrying about in groups talking.

"Now, my lads," said Captain Pash, "we're off without dogs. Are you all ready?"

There was an ominous silence followed.

"Well," said the captain, "what does this mean?"

Still there was no answer, and, one by one, the men slunk off down the hatchway into the fore-castle.

"Mutiny, by heaven!" cried Mr. Solly.

While the captain turned upon me a pitiful glance, as I gazed round, expecting to see another face through the cold mist, though it was not present.

"What's to be done—eh, my dear?" said Captain Pash. "They're drunk, every man of 'em."

"I aint drunk," said a rough voice.

And the man nicknamed Deaf Burke rolled out of the darkness.

"And I knows I aint," said another voice, which

I knew to be that of the tall young sailor who threw his cap about.

"Hooray for making up a scratch crew!" said Brunyee. "What do you say to taking what we can carry on the light sledge, and going off, we six, captain? Master Solly needn't stop to take care of the crew."

"But how did they get drunk?" said the captain, angrily.

"Found some rum in a bunker, capen," said Brunyee.

"But how come they to find it?"

"Can't say, I'm sure," said Brunyee, drily. "They fun it, though, and they drunk it; and drunk they air. Perhaps they fun it where the dogs fun the pison."

There was a little hesitation on Captain Pash's part; but at last it was settled that we should still go to make the search in the fresh direction, we six—the captain, Mr. Solly, Brunyee, the two sailors, and myself; and an hour after, when a fresh arrangement had been made of the provisions, we were slowly sliding over the glittering snow.

I cannot tell how it was; but, in spite of the morning's misfortunes, there was a feeling of elation in my heart, and I thought that perhaps, after all, this was not to be a barren journey. Heretofore all our trips had been in different directions to the east and north, this was to be to the west, across the land, so as to reach where we supposed the land turned in, and there was another bay.

This might prove an eventful journey in spite of the drawback; and over the rough ice we went at a very good rate, for it proved to be less rough till we climbed the ice-foot, and then found for some hundreds of yards a toilsome piece of way over rough cliff and glacier.

It was a wild walk, but there was something wondrous in that journey; the snow crunching beneath our feet, and glistening, as if the earth were strewn with as many diamonds as the glorious heavens that were now one encircled mass of brilliants, save where to the north there was a brilliant transcendent arch of subdued colours, playing, flickering, and dancing—now half-way up the heavens, now almost disappearing, while all the time the stars glittered through the wondrous auroral bow.

The cold was piercing, but there was not a breath of air, or it could not have been for an instant borne. Meat, fat, butter, even spirits, were all turned to splintery ice; and as we slowly traversed the snowy land at what was almost a snail's pace, there was a tinge of romance in it that was almost fascinating.

The latter words may sound light, but it seemed so to me then; and I walked on, hopeful, light, and elastic, hour after hour, till mid-day, that might have been midnight, was passed, and Captain Pash insisted upon our calling a halt.

The halt was made, the little tent of canvas set up, and the customary refreshment of tea partaken of, when the tent was struck, packed on the sledge, and we went forward again to reach the shore and descend, after an arduous climb to the ice-foot, along below which we passed on, till from behind us came the rays of the rising moon, now just at its full; and we stopped for a few minutes to gaze at the majestic

sight, as, like some huge silver shield, it rose from behind the glittering hills of ice, to shed before us a pathway bright and glistening.

We turned, then, to continue our journey, which was to last till we could find a suitable nook for a halt, when, turning a rough icy promontory, we were for a few minutes in comparative darkness, the moon not having yet risen above the shoulder of the icy eminence. The sledge, too, dragged slowly, and an ominous growling was coming from the shaggy pile of skins that contained Deaf Burke, when we were all electrified by a loud shout from Brunyee, a tremendous English cheer; for at that moment the moon cleared the eminence behind us, and sent her light right across the little bay in which we stood, to disclose, at the distance of about a quarter of a mile, close up under a mighty cliff, but plainly to be seen, glittering and bright as if it were our own ship, the form of a vessel; and as Brunyee roared out now, in a voice of thunder—

"Dawn, ahoy!"

My senses reeled, a mist swam before my eyes, and I fainted dead away.

Will-o'-the-Wisps.

THIS phenomenon is, that vegetable matter decaying in mud evolves carburetted hydrogen and carbonic acid gas, and these, when a light is applied to them, become ignited; but if an animal substance be decaying at the same time and place, small quantities of sulphuretted hydrogen are also evolved, and this gas, which has the property of spontaneous combustion, is the *ignis fatuus*.

Major Blesson has given, in the *Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal*, an interesting account of a will-o'-the-wisp which he observed in a valley of the forest of Gorbitz, which covers part of Brandenburg.

This valley is of an argillaceous and marshy nature; the water of the morass is ferruginous, and covered with a film of iridescent matter. During the day bubbles of gas are observed to rise in the water, and at night flames appear to escape from its surface.

Suspecting that there existed some connection between the flames and the bubbles of air, Major Blesson marked the place where they occurred, and, returning in the evening, he perceived there flames of a violet-blue tint, which receded as he approached them, so that he could not get near enough to examine them minutely. He had no doubt, he tells us, that the flames were attributable to an inflammable gas, which burnt in the daytime as well as at night, but could only be seen in the darkness of night.

As twilight came on, he went again to the spot, and awaited the appearance of the will-o'-the-wisp. As night approached, the flames became gradually visible; they appeared somewhat redder than before. When he advanced towards them, they receded as they had done on the previous occasion; but, feeling convinced that they would return to the place where he stood when the agitation of the air caused by his movement had ceased, he kept himself per-

fectly still, and the giddy lights returned gradually towards him. So close, indeed, were they at a certain moment, that it occurred to him to ascertain if he could light a piece of paper by their aid.

For some time the attempt was unsuccessful; he supposed that the current of air caused by his breathing was opposed to the experiment; but by turning his face aside, and with his handkerchief before his mouth, the paper soon became brown and covered with damp. At last, by taking a long narrow slip, he had the pleasure of seeing it take fire. The phenomenon was, then, owing to ignited gas.

The author of these remarks completed his observations by driving away some of the flames, until they were so far from the source of their combustion that they became extinguished; and he afterwards lit with a torch a number of little bubbles of gas as they escaped through the water in different parts of the morass.

The Egotist's Note-book.

"YE gentlemen of England who sit at home at ease, how little do ye think about the danger of the seas!" They have been terribly wroth of late, and even the lighthouse keepers have been in peril. The Scilly Islands telegraph cable having been broken in the recent storms, only lately was news received. Communication has been stopped for nine weeks with the Bishop's Rock Lighthouse men. One day they hoisted a signal, "Only one day's provisions left." The Trinity cutter went out, but could not approach within 200 yards. A buoy, with a line attached, was floated out by the lighthouse keepers, and provisions were passed up by the attached line.

It is said that the practice of advertising in pantomimes has this year reached such a height that as large a sum as £100 has been paid for a short puff of an article on a large placard in a harlequinade. There is no accounting for taste, even an advertiser's; but is there not the danger that the person who sees the announcement may look upon it as a joke?

Our old friend the sea serpent has been seen again. When are we to have a specimen stuffed for the British Museum? If he is too long for the galleries, he might be wound round the reading-room. Here is what the crew of a ship declared before the magistrates at Liverpool:—

"We, the undersigned, captain, officers, and crew of the barque *Pauline*, of London, do solemnly and sincerely declare that on July 8, 1875, in lat. 5.13 S., long. 35 W., we observed three large sperm whales, and one of them was gripped around the body with two turns of what appeared to be a huge serpent. The head and tail appeared to have a length beyond the coils of about thirty feet and its girth eight or nine feet. The serpent whirled its victim round and round for about fifteen minutes, and then suddenly dragged the whale to the bottom, head first.—George Drevat, master; Horatio Thompson, chief mate; John H. Landells, second mate; William Lewarn, steward; Owen Baker, A.B." Again, on the 13th

July, a similar serpent was seen about two hundred yards off, shooting itself along the surface, head and neck being out of the water several feet. This was seen only by the captain and an ordinary seaman. A few moments afterwards it was seen elevated some sixty feet perpendicularly in the air by the chief officer and two seamen, whose signatures are affixed—"Horatio Thompson, Owen Baker Wm. Lewarn."

Now if the monster, when it shot itself, had only shot itself dead, there would have been some good in it, and we could have had our specimen. I wish somebody really would catch a sea serpent, and bring it home. Seeing is believing.

It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good. While hundreds have been suffering from the floods, and have been literally drowned out, an enterprising firm have seized the opportunity for advertising their pumping machinery for sale or hire. Smart, undoubtedly. It would not have been amiss, though, if the fire brigade had been called out, with their steam fire engines, one of which would suck the water out of a basement in five minutes, and send it into the drains.

Some time ago, for the sake of ensuring for the people pure tea, Mr. Ruskin, it is said, took to selling it. He has now retired from the tea trade, and town no longer boasts the somewhat austere attraction of the shop in which the most æsthetic Bohea in the world was sold. For one reason, at least, a failure like this is to be regretted. Mr. Ruskin's tea, like everything belonging to or connected with him, was pure, and it is a pity that the absence of puffing—and it should, perhaps, be added, the want of sugar in addition to tea—should have injured its sale. Probably the reason of the non-success was the fact that the supply was not known. Let him try again, and, sinking the sugar, sell butter as well—butter that butter is.

Here are some facts of interest to the ladies—and gentlemen who pay bills:—

A lady's riding-dress advertised for sale in the *Spectator* of June 2, 1711, consisted of "blue camlet, well laced with silver, being a coat, waistcoat, petticoat, hat, and feather." Another, in 1712, mentions an Isabella-coloured kincob gown, flowered with green and gold; a dark-coloured cloth (probably linen) gown and petticoat, with two silver orrises; a purple and gold Atlas gown; a scarlet and gold Atlas petticoat, edged with gold; a black velvet petticoat; Allejah petticoat, striped with green, gold, and white; a blue and gold Atlas gown and petticoat, and clogs laced with silver. These gaudy articles of attire were well matched by blue, yellow, pink, and green hoods. The majority of these fashions were, no doubt, from France, as the *Spectator* describes a Parisian doll imported by the milliners.

Mrs. Beales's losses in the same year (1712) comprised a green silk-knit waistcoat, with gold and silver flowers all over it, and about fourteen yards of gold and silver thick lace on it; also a petticoat

of rich, strong-flowered satin, red and white, all in great flowers or leaves, and scarlet flowers with black specks brocaded in, raised high like velvet.

In 1717 died Mrs. Selby, the celebrated mantua-maker, whose inventive talents supplied the ladies with the hooped petticoat, which survived its originator.

In 1719 were advertised ladies' black and white beaver hats, faced with coloured silks, and trimmed with gold or silver lace.

In 1720 wigs maintained their ground; and it is reported that the white hair of an aged woman produced fifty pounds from a periwig-maker.

Possibly the average Briton takes his matutinal tub with a touch of Pharisaical pride that he is not as Italians or Frenchmen, who have certainly no natural affinity to cold water at seven a.m. on a winter day. Yet the English fashion in this matter is already beginning to revolutionize the Continent of Europe; and the French satirist now laughs at the Bohemians of his own country for their dislike to systematic ablutions.

A conversation was recently overheard between two members of that class, of which a fragment will suffice—

"Where are you going?"

"To take a bath—won't you come?"

"No, thanks, I'm waiting for a good opportunity. I shall try and get one the day before I am examined by the regimental surgeon."

"Are you one of this year's conscripts?"

"No, the year after next."

That beautiful plant, the *Pyrus Japonica*, the Japanese quince, will soon be out. A pleasant writer says of it:—"Every one knows the brilliant shrub whose crimson blossoms are like a fire, and might well suggest that this was the 'burning bush' that Moses saw. At any rate, it is a burning bush unconsumed every spring. As the shrub grows old it bears round, hard quinces, very fragrant to the smell, but hard enough to do service in battle. We never heard of any one using them for culinary purposes; but this year our hearts were moved within us to save them to human uses. So we gathered a dozen, and conferred with the cook. 'Let them be stewed slowly all day, with sugar and water—a little water, but much sugar.' In the very spirit of science we tried the compote, and re-delivered it to the cook with instructions to stew another day with sugar in more abundance. The fight went on, and I can't say the sugar ever got the victory." For my part, I once tried to eat a portion of the stew, but "Oh," as Toole says, "scissors!" I wonder I had a tooth left in my head afterwards.

Mourning rings were used in 1703. Satin gowns were lined with Persian silk; and laced kerchiefs and Spanish leather shoes, laced with gold, were also common. To these the ladies added bare necks, with gold and other crosses suspended on them. The old custom of setting little circular pieces of black silk in various parts of the woman's face, well known by the name of patches even in our en-

lightened days, prevailed to a most extravagant degree. They then, as subsequently, varied in colour, and were supported by their auxiliaries in elegant frizzed and powdered false locks.

A dealer in second-hand clothes, living in the Quartier Latin in Paris, hit upon a somewhat ingenious idea for disposing of the garments which were too old-fashioned or too dilapidated to fetch anything like a good price. Attached to the various articles hanging outside his shop were modestly written cards, containing announcements like the following:—

"Pair of trousers worn by M. Guizot on his last rival in Paris."

"Overcoat belonging to M. Littré before he came celebrated."

"Dressing-gown formerly belonging to Alexandre Dumas;" or, "Vest worn by M. Thiers when President of the Republic."

It is needless to say that these interesting relics are rapidly bought and proudly worn by the economical students, notwithstanding the scepticism of some of the purchasers.

"Would you have me believe," said a young artist one day, as he inspected a velvet coat, "that this belonged to Victor Hugo? Plainly, it is small for him."

"Do you think," replied the unabashed dealer, "that Victor Hugo would ever have sold so good a coat if he could have worn it with any degree of comfort?"

And the bargain was struck.

"And what should you do," asked a rather vain lady of her little nephew, who had been assuring her of his unbounded affection for her—"what should you do, Henry, if your good aunt were to die, and your uncle were to marry again?"

"Why," replied Henry, without the slightest hesitation, "I should go to the wedding, of course."

"The Moral Side of a Verb" was the subject recently chosen by a lecturer. Next, perhaps, he will favour us with something on "The Pernicious Tendencies of Nouns, used Adjectively," "The Female Gender as a Social Disorganizer," or "The Interjection and its Effects on Bad Language." The subject is wide, and its ramifications many.

Now that winter has come, and ladies are looking forward to many a pleasant evening spent in the enjoyment of the dance, they often forget the attendant fatigue, until the exhaustion of the following day reminds them that every pleasure has its alloy. This fatigue is in great measure produced by the tight ligature or garter with which the stockings are fastened, hindering the free circulation of the blood. Medical men are unanimous in declaring the use of garters to be a most fruitful source of disease. Every lady desiring health and comfort should at once provide herself with a pair of the new patent stocking suspenders, made by Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London. The price is only 3s. per pair, of any draper, or post free for two extra stamps.

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Amongst the Gorillas.

IT is hard to say whether the search for the North Pole or the endeavour to discover the source of the Nile is the more attractive to that class of Englishman, of the Guy Livingstone type, which the late Mr. George Laurence was the first to invent, and which he used to delight to describe. Certain it is that both scenes of adventure have proved extremely alluring to many enterprising spirits, both of this and former days; but, especially during the last fifty years, this has been the case with Africa. Sir John Mandeville and his marvels, alike of pen and pencil, we have long since relegated to the realms of quaint literature; Marco Polo we take *cum grano salis*; even M. du Chaillu we boggled at for a long time. We have, however, had to accept Speke and Grant; to give credence to Sir Samuel Baker's startling records of the conquest of half a continent; and Dr. Livingstone has convinced us of the reality of Mtesa, Tanganyika, Ujiji, and a host of other unpronounceable localities. Nor does the roll of African marvels stop here, for the gallant Cameron has "topped" them all by his wonderful march from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic; and even now, as we write, is not Stanley conquering nations and slaying his hundreds? There is another name still to mention, and it is that of a traveller, as daring and as intrepid as any on the illustrious scroll—we mean that of Captain Richard F. Burton, whose two volumes on Gorilla Land we have before us now.

How a man can roam over South America—spend some years in Syria and Palestine—become intimate with Iceland, and familiar with Istria and the waters of the Adriatic, and find time withal to write a couple of volumes or so about each, and still have "go" in him to hunger for other lands to conquer, is one of those things "no fellow" can be expected to understand! The hard fact remains, however; and, as far as Captain Burton is concerned, it is not only a hard but a pleasant fact, seeing that it results in such readable volumes as these two on our table.

The stirring descriptions by Paul du Chaillu of his encounters with the gorilla seem to have suggested this particular trip; and the admirers of that energetic Frenchman, who remember with pain the attempts made to sneer him down by the dons of the British Association, will be pleased to read Captain Burton's testimony to the discoveries and adventures he laid claim to have made.

"I jealously looked into every statement," says the captain; "and his numerous friends will be pleased to see how many of his assertions are confirmed by my experience."

Gorilla Land lies north and south of the Equator. The noble river high Gaboon flows through a large portion of the district, which is happily destitute of that greatest horror of African travellers—the mangrove, famous for swamp fever. This district, with its seaboard, is known by the name of the river itself, and is spoken of by travellers and commercial men alike as "The Gaboon." Burton describes it as French, with a purely English trade, just as Gambia is said to be English with a purely French trade.

The notion of exchanging the two has more than once been popular, and if the Franco-German War had not broken out at the time it did, the chances are the "swopping" would have been a *fait accompli*. Not the least recommendation the idea has had, in the eyes of more than Captain Burton, has been the opening such a plan would offer of establishing English convict stations on the West Coast of Africa. Certainly, we have a large proportion of what are called the "criminal classes," to whom a few years' residence in the neighbourhood of the gorilla might be humanizing and beneficial in many ways. Setting out from the Gaboon with a retinue of four "pull-a-boys," a commissariat which included candles, sugar, bread, cocoa, desiccated milk, potatoes, cognac, Médoc, ham, sausages, soup, and preserved meats, the first halt the captain made was at Denistown. This, it appears, is the capital of Le Roi Denis. A negro "of middle stature, with compact frame, and well-made; of great muscular power; about sixty years old; very black, by contrast with the snow-white beard veiling his brown face."

In response to Captain Burton's request for a *chasseur*, Le Roi Denis deputed his son, Prince Paul, to accompany the traveller as guide to the hunting grounds.

Thus equipped, they started on their way, halting first at Mbátá, which the French call La Plantation. Here the people turned out *en masse* to see the white greenhorn who had come to bag and buy gorillas. A ready way of obtaining baksheesh in the Gaboon seems to be to claim relationship with every new-comer. Thus, Prince Paul at once gathered round him a goodly crowd of fathers and mothers, uncles and aunts, brothers and sisters, cousins and connections, and finally wound up by introducing to the captain a pretty woman, with very neat hands and ankles, and a most *matine* physiognomy, as his sister; informing him also that she was his (the captain's) wife *pro tem*.

King Denis provided the captain with a huntsman named Fortune—formerly a cook at the Gaboon, but now a man of note in his tribe. He holds the position of a country gentleman, who can afford to write himself M. F. H. Fortune was personally acquainted with Mpolo (Paul du Chaillu), and can boast of having slain, with his own hands, upwards of a hundred gorillas.

From this man Captain Burton learned enough to correct Du Chaillu's account in one important particular—viz., as to the house-building propensities of the chimpanzee and gorilla. Instead of the "cottage," described in Du Chaillu's adventures, with its neat parachute-like roof, Burton saw to his surprise "two heaps of dry sticks, which a schoolboy might have taken for birds' nests; the rude beds—boughs torn off from the tree—not gathered, were built in forks, one ten and the other twenty feet above ground, and both were canopied by the tufted tops." But here the industry and ingenuity of our monkey ancestor ends. "Every hunter consulted upon the subject ridiculed the branchy roof *tied* with vines," and declared that the animals limited their efforts to making a place for sitting, not for shelter.

Unfortunately, Captain Burton had but a short

time at his disposal, and could not afford to go far inland in search of game. We are therefore not surprised to learn that, although he "saw him and heard him, and came upon his trail, and found his mortal spoils," through no fault of his own, he utterly failed to shoot a gorilla. Those who have sought for large game in lands where the firing of muskets has taught wild animals their only safety is far from the haunts of men, will readily understand that bush shooting, especially near the coast, is very much a matter of luck. One man may beat the forest assiduously and vainly for five or six weeks, another will be successful the very first day.

"Tis not in mortals to command success," and though the captain, like Addison's Cato, did more—deserved it—the result was *nil*. Luck was dead against him during the whole of his stay in Gorilla Land. He ran a fair risk of drowning in one attempt, was knocked down by lightning the next time, and on his last trip had a narrow escape from the fall of a giant branch that grazed his hammock.

But, though robbed of his prey, the traveller saw enough of the lairs and haunts of the gorilla to convince him of the substantial truthfulness of M. du Chaillu's description.

Three Hundred Virgins.

A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS.

CHAPTER XXV.—DEBORAH'S GRATITUDE.

AS hand in hand, Helston and the fair girl at his side went cautiously through the wood, seeking for safety, they became aware of the fact that the eruption was at an end: the mountain had made its last effort in the burst of lava, and it was now comparatively silent, though the lava flowed on.

After about a couple of hours, the roar of the steam became less awful; and by the afternoon the lava scarcely moved across the sands. A breeze had sprung up, which bore off the clouds of steam and smoke; and, to the great joy of Helston, he and his companion were able to make signals to their friends, all of whom seemed in safety upon the knoll, though they were surrounded by a glassy river of lava, which, as it slowly cooled, looked lurid in the light of the day.

For now the sun shone out, as if to display to the despairing people the hideous ruin around. As far as eye could reach, all was black desolation—smoke rising from wood and dale, steam from the dried-up beds of streamlets, the ship vanished from sight, and starvation before them.

They returned again and again to Deborah, to find that she had not moved from the position in which she had been left, and, whether in stupor or sleep, she seemed to be breathing heavily.

Helston knelt by her and placed his hands upon her pulse, when she opened her eyes, gazed at him for a moment, closed them, and turned away.

"Are you in pain?" he asked.

There was no reply.

"Can I do anything for you?"

Deborah turned a desolate look upon him for a moment, and then, closing her eyes, motioned to him to leave her; and, at rest somewhat as to her

condition, he walked slowly away and rejoined Grace, not seeing that Deborah half raised herself and watched them for a few moments, with a look of intense hatred upon her face.

"If she were dead—if she were dead!" the woman muttered; and then, shivering, she turned away, covered her face with her hands, and lay perfectly still.

As night came on, the horrors of the scene increased, for a dull red glow shone up from the lava streams, and was reflected from the sky. Helston had made several attempts to get near to the others, but in vain; and at last, as darkness fell, parched with thirst, faint with hunger, Grace knelt with Helston upon the soft dry sands to ask in prayer for protection through the night, ere, utterly exhausted, she sank to rest upon her sandy pillow, with Helston watching by her side; but inexorable sleep soon closed his eyes till the coming of another day.

Had he been wakeful, he would have seen twice over during the night a sight which would have chilled the very blood within his veins; for about midnight, when the sky was darkest, save where it was illumined by the lurid glow from the lava, Deborah, who had been sleeping, rose slowly to her feet, and began to walk to and fro.

At first her steps were feeble, and she staggered, for her head swam; but the cool, soft breeze which now blew from the sea revived her.

By degrees, however, she grew firmer; and then, muttering to herself, she began to search about in the darkness, till she felt her hand come in contact with a block of stone.

She essayed to lift it, but it was too heavy; so she sought about again, ending by finding a piece to her mind.

This she poised for a few moments in her hands, raised it as high as her head, and then dashed it down upon the sand, where it fell with a heavy thud.

She uttered a low, harsh laugh as she picked it up, and placed it beneath her arm.

"What of her beautiful face after that?" she exclaimed. "What of her life? Let him kiss and caress her then, if he will!"

She stopped short, looking about for the spot where she had been so carefully carried when her life was saved; but she had paid no heed to her steps when seeking for the stone, and her head was confused.

She took a dozen paces in one direction, then as many in another, but to be no nearer, for she had utterly forgotten the way she had gone; and not only was the darkness confusing, but the various landmarks that might have been made out even in the gloom were gone; tall, palm-like trees being turned to stunted, charred poles where they were not levelled with the ground.

Deborah uttered an exclamation of annoyance, and went on searching.

"If I could only find them," she muttered.

And her fell design was only too plain, as she sought about in every direction for the spot where she had seen, though apparently asleep, Grace lie down to rest, with Helston watching at her side.

For quite an hour she wandered about, sometimes

laying the heavy stone down as she paused to rest, and then lifting it once more, as she continued her search, sometimes near, sometimes far off; for the gloom confused her as much as her fevered brain.

Twice over she passed within a few yards of where Grace lay peacefully asleep; and upon the second occasion she stopped short, with her back to those she sought, and, with her hand over her eyes, carefully scanned the ground.

It seemed that now she must see them; but no, she passed on, and Grace Monroe was saved from a fearful death; for, had the wretched woman seen her, she would have dashed out her brains as she lay.

The darkness saved her, for Deborah wandered on and on, till, weary and confused, she stumbled so near to the lava that her face was scorched again by the glow.

As she staggered back, she dropped the stone; and when she made an effort to regain it, her head swam, and she fell down, while, when she strove to rise, she sank back once more, and was fain to crawl painfully on her hands and knees farther and farther away from the glowing heat, till, utterly spent, she sank upon her side and fell into a deep, stupor-like sleep.

As Helston started into wakefulness, half-confused still, his eyes fell upon the sleeping face of Grace; and, as he bent over it, she unclosed her eyes, to gaze wonderingly in his for a few moments. Then the light of recollection came, and as he bent lower, her lips did not refuse the kiss that he placed upon them.

Grace started into wakefulness at that touch, and a cry of fear escaped her at the sight of the seared and blackened face which was within a few inches of her own.

Recollecting all that had passed, however, on the instant, she rose quickly, and placed her hands in Helston's.

"And I have slept all night," she exclaimed.

"Yes," he replied, gazing lovingly into the sweet face before him. "And I was to have watched over you; but I, too, was overcome by sleep, and proved a poor guardian. But there, I think the danger is ended now."

"Let us go and see to Deborah," said Grace, hastily.

And she led the way, giving Helston a pang as he noted how eager she was to have a third person in their company.

"Yes, certainly," he said, trying to hide his annoyance.

But on reaching the spot, it was to find the impression of Deborah's body plainly marked in the thick coating of grey ash which lay upon the earth; and they were able to trace her footsteps for a time, but they soon became obliterated or confused; and though they sought in all directions, they were unable to find further trace of the wretched woman.

"Heaven forbid that she may not have come to harm!" ejaculated Helston. "Let us go and see if our friends have noticed her."

The next minute they were walking towards the half-burned wood which came nearest to the lava that separated them from the knoll; and now they got near enough to talk to their friends, though the

heat forbade a nearer approach. They were suffering horribly from thirst, and a terrible feeling of despair was creeping over all; for they could see no chance of escape from their fire-surrounded prison, which would take days to cool sufficiently for them to cross, perhaps more.

CHAPTER XXVI.—LAURENT AND HIS ENEMY.

LAURENT felt that his last moment had come, for the monster that had seized him compressed his arms against his sides in a way that threatened instant death. He seized the huge fold with one hand; but, though a muscular man, and he pushed with all his might, his efforts seemed perfectly futile, and, with a sickening feeling of horror and disgust, he felt the hideous embrace tightening, and saw by the pale glow that shone through the smoke the ghastly, spectral-like head rising slowly higher and higher, and then drawn back preparatory to the creature striking him.

At this moment his muscles refused their office; and nerveless, flaccid, and helpless as one in a dream, he felt that he was completely in the monster's power, and even though the pressure was now suffocating, he felt but very little pain, only a feeling of sorrow for those whom he had been called upon to protect shot through his brain, and then he felt himself hurled backwards, for with a terrible blow the serpent struck him on the shoulder, close to his arm, and the sharp teeth closed upon it tightly.

There was a terrible motion, then, of the coils of the serpent's body as they ascended his chest, and a couple more enveloped his legs as he lay prone in the creature's embrace, now nearly stupefied, for all seemed over.

Had Laurent been capable of seeing that which took place in the circle of fire where he was suffering so horrible a fate, he would have been aware of the fact that Mary Dance had stood, for a time, perfectly paralysed, and had seen the terrible struggle from the first; but, suddenly throwing off her inanimation, she uttered a cry like a wounded tigress, her comely face was distorted with rage, and she darted towards the hatchet that had fallen from her lover's hand.

As she reached it, a blow from the serpent's tail laid her prostrate, half stunned, in the volcanic dust.

She recovered herself on the instant, though, and rose, seized the hatchet, and, utterly devoid of fear, pursued the monster, whose efforts had carried it so near to the glowing lava that her face was scorched, and her naturally crisp hair seemed to stand back from her shapely head.

Mary's eyes were dilated, and she stood there pale, with distended nostrils, looking in the strangely weird light like some heroine of classic lore ready to do battle with a dragon, as, going close up to the hideous monster, she raised the keen hatchet with both hands above her head, and brought it down with all her force upon one of the serpent's thickest coils.

So tightly was the lithe, muscular body strained over its victim that the keen blade divided scaly skin, flesh, and muscle, a great rift opening in the serpent's body, and the blood spouting forth in a fountain.

The effect was instantaneous. The serpent, in its agony, unlaced itself like lightning from its victim, writhed like a monstrous worm, and seemed to flog the dusty earth like a whip lash, driving up a cloud of choking dust that almost concealed it from the watching crowd of spectators.

At the first writhe, Mary was driven, breathless, half a dozen yards, to totter and fall; but she had sufficient sense left to see what followed, and that was that the monster, in its agonized writhings, beat the earth in all directions with its tail, bringing it down at last full upon the burning lava.

There was a sharp, crackling, hissing sound, and a vivid light sprang up, in which Mary saw that, maddened by pain, and evidently insensate as to the direction it took, the monster threw another of its coils over the burning lava, which seized it as it were, and increased the hideous crackling and blaze.

What followed did not last above a minute; for, as if to attack the inflicter of its hideous suffering, held fast as it was by the burning lower part of its body, the serpent threw itself, or else writhed in one terrible bound, right upon the burning lava.

There was a renewal of the hissing and crackling, the monster was seen to be writhing in the midst of a vivid blaze for a short time, and then a faint smoke hovered for a space over the orange flood, and not a vestige of the writhing enemy remained.

Mary struggled to her feet and tottered to Laurent's side, where he lay, scorched by the glow from the lava.

He was motionless, and she felt that he was dead; but as she saw his shoulder stained with blood, where the serpent's teeth had been, her nerve seemed to return, and, bending down, she passed her arms round him and dragged him farther towards the centre, before she knelt down and placed her hand upon his breast.

"Is he dead?" a voice whispered, hoarsely, and Mary now became aware of the fact that several of the frightened women had crept round her.

"Yes—no," she panted. "I don't know. Quick: bring water to bathe his face."

"Bring water!" said one of the women, bitterly: "fire you mean—there is plenty."

"Oh, what am I saying?" wailed Mary. "He is dead—he is dead!"

"And spared the tortures of slowly burning to death," said another, sadly. "Poor fellow, he was a brave, handsome, true man!"

"How dare you speak like that?" cried Mary, turning upon her, mad with passionate grief. "You loved him. You as good as own to it. He was mine—mine only. He loved me; and now—now he is dead!"

She threw herself with a shriek of misery upon the prostrate man.

"Shall we take her away?" whispered one of the women to the other; but, low as was the voice in which she spoke, Mary heard her.

"No, no, no!" she shrieked. "Let no one touch me. He is not dead. I saved him—I saved his life, and he will live to thank me! Laurent—Laurent," she whispered, as she bent lower, and placed her lips close to his ear. "Speak! it is Mary—your Mary calls you."

There was no movement, and Mary frantically set herself to chafe his hands, bending down over him in the dim light to try if she could see any change in his countenance—which, however, remained impassive.

"He is not dead!" she cried impetuously, and the laugh which accompanied it was hysterical in its nature. "There, his heart beats—I knew it did! Look, he is moving!"

The women who grouped round looked down with a stunned air of indifference, so prostrated were they by the sense of desolation and misery which overcame them, and one or two shook their heads mournfully at the scene before them.

"Don't—don't—don't shake your heads like that, foolish girls!" cried Mary, in an agony of rage. "He is not dead, I tell you; he lives. No, no; keep back!" she shrieked, to one who went down on one knee, and was about to feel if the poor fellow's heart still beat. "No one shall touch him but me; for he is mine, and I saved him."

"Poor fellow!" muttered the girl, rising again. "Mary Dance, leave him now, or you will drive yourself mad."

"Mad? Not I. Yes, you want to get me away that you may rob me of him; but no one shall have him but me. He is mine—mine alone; and there—there—did I not tell you so? He is not dead; I knew he was not."

Mary pointed triumphantly to the prostrate man, as he wearily raised one of his hands, tossed it aside, and then let it lie for a moment across his chest.

The women started with surprise; and Mary, regardless of their presence, bent over him she had saved, and kissed his face again and again.

"I knew he could not die, and leave me!" she cried, joyfully.

And now, as she crouched on her knees behind him, she lifted his head upon her bosom, and rocked it to and fro.

"She's mad—driven mad with horror," whispered one of the women.

And the whisper passed from one to the other, and they all pressed forward to gaze in a dazed, helpless way at the dimly-seen group there in the dust.

"No," said Mary, speaking now more calmly, as her hysterical fit wore off. "No, I am not mad, unless it is with joy; for see, he is coming to."

"Mad with joy!" groaned two or three. "How long have we to live?"

"I don't know," muttered Mary to herself; "I only know he lives, and he loves me. We should but die together."

As Mary whispered these words to herself, she became aware that Laurent was fast recovering, and she raised his head still higher.

It was some time before he opened his eyes, and then he gazed about in a vacant manner upon the group of women, the glowing lava, and the dim haze of smoke above his head. Then he closed his eyes again, to lie perfectly still.

All at once recollection came to him with a leap, and he became conscious of the arms that were wreathed so tightly round him.

He was weak with exhaustion; and for a few moments his efforts were nerveless, as believing still that the serpent held him in its terrible embrace, he thrust at the poor girl's arms, and struggled to get away, uttering the most excited cries, till in her bitterness Mary loosened him, and he pushed her violently from him.

"Kill it, some one!" he gasped, as he glared at her; and then, tottering away, he seemed to nerve himself for one bold attempt to escape, and knowing nothing of his acts, save that he wished to flee from that which had held him in its coils, he dashed down the hillside right for the fluid golden lava.

Spring-heeled Jack.

NEVER again, if I can help it; one such night is enough to last a man his lifetime.

When I go to bed I go to sleep, and consequently the intrusion of a piece of mechanism which keeps going off interferes with that intention, and, as the Americans say, disturbs a man "some."

It was all owing to the Wansbys' coming this last Christmas uninvited, and necessitating scheming to accommodate their party of four; the result of the scheming being that I had to sleep in the dressing-room on a little iron bedstead, out of the bottom of which my legs would have stuck far enough for the chickens to roost upon, after the fashion of the supports of the celebrated Old Dan Tucker, of negro minstrelsy, had not my wife kindly arranged two chairs at the bottom, on to which the bed was continued.

But that was not the worst of it, for it was settled that my boy Jack was to sleep with me; and, in the exuberance of his delight at the promised treat, the young dog ran at me, kicked, butted, and nearly stood on his head for joy.

I was not so joyful for my part. At all events, I was able to bear my excitement without open manifestations; and after supper—Tom Wansby never goes to bed without his supper—we played four rubbers of whist, and went to bed.

I remember, as I undressed, wondering how it was possible for a boy aged seven to spread himself so completely over a bed meant for two. Jack had managed it somehow, for he was stretched out like an octopus, with legs all over pillows, bolster, bed, and the rest of it; and it required no little ingenuity to get that boy to occupy his own position of the roosting place.

Then I yawned, and got into bed, settled myself down comfortably, and was just beginning to run over the annoyances of company, when I happened to touch Jack with my elbow.

That boy seemed to have been set like a trap, for at that slight touch he went off with a jerk, his arms and legs flew all over the bed, and it was some time before I could get him settled again, when I lay as still as a mouse, hoping to keep him quiet that way.

Did it? Oh, no; for evidently something he had been eating disagreed with him, and he began to work his arms round and round like a windmill—to such an extent, indeed, that, had I not fenced them

off, there would have been serious consequences to my eyes.

I found the wisest thing to do was to turn my back; and then I lay and wondered at the immense amount of vitality contained in so small a proportion of human fabric; and these thoughts grew stronger as Jack drubbed on my back, and, by way of variety, took to imagining me a football, and that the honour of his school depended upon his kicking the next goal.

I might say that sleep under such circumstances was not very pleasant, but I will go further, and say it was impossible; so I lay perfectly still—that is to say, as still as I could—and tried to think out what Master Jack's dreams must be.

I never got to any definite knowledge upon the point, for when questioned the next morning about them, Jack's memory was a blank; but I went as near as was possible, and came to the conclusion that during one part of that awful night Jack was dreaming that he was a mower in some pleasant meadow; for he turned one of his legs into a scythe, and with it kept mowing at me, until, by way of a change, he tried the other leg, whose scythe-like movement was even more vigorous than the first.

My occupations were varied that night, for a good deal of time was taken up in restoring the bedclothes to their pristine smoothness, after Jack had been floating on his back in a troubled sea, after swimming vigorously in the normal position. Evidently in deep distress, Jack would now take to hoisting signals of distress to passing ships, his signals being the top sheet hoisted flagwise on one leg; but these being unanswered, he took to hurling the pillow aloft two or three times, before—evidently under the influence of despair—he gave two or three frantic strokes, and then dived down into the depths of the bedclothes, from which I had to rescue him, hot, gasping, and evidently nearly spent.

How that boy could hurl his head, as he did, against the wall without hurting himself is a problem I have never been able to solve. It must have been elastic; while as to the knots in which he tied himself, and from which I disentangled him, no one would believe in them unless they had been seen.

I gave up the idea of sleep at last in utter despair, for it was madness to attempt it after the last doze, from which I was awakened by the young dog walking right up my back, and ending by casting his legs round my neck, *à la garrotter*.

Arms? Nothing of the kind—but his legs, which were like so much warm india-rubber, especially when I pulled them away, and they returned with a spring.

I got fancying myself "Sindbad the Sailor," and that this was a young Old Man of the Mountain settled upon my shoulders; and, in my dreamy, sleepy state, I began wondering whether I ought not to get up and make wine by squeezing the sponge into the water glass, and giving him to drink till he rolled off; but I did not try.

I wonder how many times that young dog kicked all the clothes off, and I had to get up and pull them on! I don't like to exaggerate, so, to be on the safe side, I'll say two thousand—quite enough to be irritating to a peaceful sleeper. And the annoying

part of it was, that it did not seem to matter in the least to Jack, for he slept happily enough, anyhow, so long as he was not touched; when he went off like a flash or firework, or a piece of watchwork with a trigger, all springs and wheels. If he had his head on the pillow, he was happy; so he was if his head was underneath it. By the same rule, he slept serenely if his feet were on the pillow, or underneath it. I found his head on the chair at the foot of the bed, at least a dozen times; while how often he was hanging out like a sloth or bat with his head downwards, and only held up by his feet being tightly twisted in the bedclothes, I'm afraid to say.

All I know is, that half the night seemed to have been passed in hauling Jack into bed, and the other half in Jack hauling me out.

I don't wish to be personal, but I must hint at one thing, and that is this: directly the Wansbys were gone, two days later I invested eighteenpence in a pair of nail scissors, and, presenting them to his mamma, insisted upon her going upstairs with Jack, shutting herself up in a bed-room, and then interviewing the young rascal's toes. Talk about scratches—but there, I will not; the subject is too painful.

At last the morning dawned, and at sunrise Jack woke up, and I went to sleep.

But not for long. Jack had evidently had a very pleasant and refreshing night's slumber, whilst I had been wide-awake; and, probably in utter ignorance of this fact, Jack began to sing, drumming an accompaniment with his heels, and going through the whole of his *répertoire*, which included airs from all the popular *operas bouffes*, ballads heard in the drawing-room, and scraps of the music hall songs picked up in the street, his favourite being "Tommy, make room for your uncle."

Now, if he had been my uncle, I would gladly have made room for him, and sought a couch elsewhere; but as the curly, golden-headed young reprobate was my own son and heir, I reversed the position, and grew so exasperated, that at last, by one vigorous movement—half kick, half push—I sent him out into the middle of the room.

To use the old term of the noble art of self-defence, Jack came up smiling. He was not in the slightest degree annoyed, he only took it as a challenge, and, seizing the pillow, he attacked me vigorously, till there was a battle-royal, and I got the worst of it by far.

I gave it up then, and sat up in bed, stared at the happy, flushed young face, and came to the conclusion that the boy must be boiling over with health and vitality—a surmise strengthened by the tremendous breakfast I saw him soon afterwards eat.

I have never had such a night since, and will not suffer one again for all the Wansbys in creation. Such boys are only meant to sleep alone, I feel sure; and if I am again to have a bedfellow, let it be a nice, warm, healthy, young conger eel; for then I shall know what I have to expect.

Boys are, I believe—and I dare say Darwin will bear me out—a compound of snake, monkey, watch-spring, and india-rubber. I say, no more boy. I would rather sleep with chickens on a perch.

A Day after Quail.

RESTLESS human beings go into strange districts sometimes in search of prey. I have friends who seek Central Africa, the far west of America, and the extreme north of India, in their sporting excursions. For myself, I am more modest, and have confined myself to Europe. It is surprising, though, what wildly romantic scenery may be found within very easy reach of our more civilized lands.

One autumn I made up my mind to have an expedition to the Caucasus; and following out my intent, I believe I trespassed into Asia.

The object of my search was a kind of quail—the francolin—a bird very little known to Europeans, and of which a very excellent representation is given in our illustration.

The francolin is a bird a little larger than our red partridge, partaking greatly of the nature of quail, and having the peculiarity of possessing spurs upon its legs. Very wild in its nature, it flies well, runs at a tremendous rate, and can perch with ease in trees.

In colour it is of a rich reddish-brown, marked with black; its two wings being so arranged as to give it a lanceolate appearance, similar to that seen in the neck hackles of some fowls.

These birds live amongst the bushes on the mountain sides, and at the edges of the great forests which border upon the Black Sea, and the amount of guile necessary to approach within shot is something startling. Only those possessed of the greatest amount of patience should go francolin shooting; but those who do make it their pursuit meet with their reward in the delicious morsel the beautiful bird makes for the spit.

There is reward, too, in the beautiful scenery through which the sportsman roams, amongst cedar, cypress, oak, beech, and juniper. Here and there he comes upon groves of almond, peach, fig, apricot, and quince, in the warmer valleys, while ever and again he pauses to gaze in rapt delight, through some opening in the woods, at the magnificent snow-capped mountains, and calls to mind that one of these peaks is the Ararat of Scripture, where the Ark found a resting-place after the Flood.

The country around, though, does not by any means abound in animals, though the patient hunter may find the bear, wolf, jackal, and goat, and a kind of wild cat. Of smaller animals, such as hares, ermines, polecats, and the like, there is a fair amount, while birds of prey are plentiful.

At the present time a trip to the Caucasus might not be very convenient; but for the naturalist or sportsman, when peace is not threatened, a run through the wonderful groves, woods, ravines, and mountains well repays all trouble.

It has often been proposed to acclimatize the francolin, and let it run wild amongst our other game; but whether so pugnacious a little gentleman might be out of place remains to be seen.

AN old lady, whose son was about to proceed to the Black Sea, gave him, among her parting admonitions, strict injunctions not to bathe in that sea; for she did not want to see him come back a nigger.

Among the Icebergs.

CHAPTER XXII.

MY swoon only lasted a few minutes; and then, as I came to, and dreaded to ask if what I had seen was true indeed, I felt myself lifted upon the sledge, which was drawn rapidly towards the ship, and at the end of ten minutes we were close to the silent, ghostly ark.

My heart beat violently, but I did not shriek. Brunyee had been round to the stern, to read there plainly enough the vessel's name; and though a feeling of dread that was awful seemed to contract my heart, I did not for a moment hesitate, but following Brunyee and Captain Pash, walked up the ice steps that had been made up the side of the frozen-in vessel, and, entering the door in the bulwarks, stood upon the covered-in deck of my father's ship while a light was obtained.

All was orderly and regular, and with the experience I had had of Arctic life, I could read in an instant that Captain Grant, when frozen hopelessly in, had taken the usual precautions—making a fuel house over the deck, setting up stoves, swinging lanterns, and making every possible preparation for resisting the fearful cold.

From the light in his hand Brunyee soon lit a couple of lanterns, and then we were better able to glance around what seemed to be a building cut in glittering ice, for everywhere, wood and iron, deck and roof, rope and canvas, were covered with twinkling crystals. I had seen all this at a glance; but what else was there to see?

I asked myself that question, trembling violently the while, and knowing that in a few minutes I should know; for Captain Pash quietly put his arm round my waist, as Brunyee and Mr. Solly went towards the cabin stairs.

"Stop with me a little, my darling," he said, as if I had been his own child.

And as our eyes met, we read each other's thoughts; and I let my head sink upon his breast, while the weak tears flowed.

The suspense, though, was not for long: in a minute or two I heard the footsteps ascending from the chief cabin, crossing the crashing ice upon the deck, and then descending the forecastle, when, in another minute, the voice of Mr. Solly shouted—

"Not a soul nor body—neither on board!"

I could not help it—a hysterical cry of joy would burst from my breast. I was not, then, to be called upon to gaze upon the dead—upon those who had held out to the last, and then succumbed to the bitter frost. No, there was no dread sight to gaze upon—I was not to thaw those set features with my bitter tears. Here was the vessel, and it had not been sunk nor crushed, but frozen in, even as had been ours; and what of the crew—what of poor Mark?

As if to answer the question earnestly put, came the voice of old Brunyee, as his ice-covered, furry figure appeared, swinging a lantern, with which he had been making a further tour of inspection—

"Not a bit of grub of any kind on board, sir, and only a little fuel. They'd begun to burn the

cable and the six-inch hawser—there's a lot of it for'ard—cut up into bits ready for the stove. They must have stopped till the firing got low, and then have started off, sledging and dragging their boat—for there's no long boat, as I can see—and, perhaps, by this time they've got to one of the Danes' settlements, and then home."

"Well, shut that door," said Captain Pash, "and let's make all snug for the night. Start a fire in the cabin directly, Burke, and let's do something to drive out the chill. Here, come along, my dear, and let's go below. There, bless your heart, don't turn scared; I'm ready to dance and whistle, I am. Only to think of our coming across the ship, after all."

In a very short time the cabin stove was roaring, and giving out a pleasant heat, as the tarry oakum burned brightly; water was heated, and tea made; and then, once more, Captain Pash and Brunyee went round the vessel, to come back, at the end of half an hour, with the report that everything was left ship-shape, that there was a fine cargo of oil on board, and that it was evident that, caught in the ice, the captain and crew had stayed until provisions had failed, and there was no chance of the vessel thawing out, and that they had gone south.

Had there been any endorsement necessary to prove what the seafaring men could so easily read, there it was in a tin box, left upon the cabin table, which, upon being brought to the light and opened, contained the following document, written in bold characters:—

"This ship, the *Northern Dawn*, of Hull, is owned by Mr. Anthony Wynne. We were caught in the ice on the 28th of August, 18—, and we stayed with her till the 28th of August, 18—, when our provisions being ended, we leave her to try and reach Upernavik, or some other port, with the long boat.

Signed, "MARK GRANT, Captain.
EDWARD LESLIE, Mate."

The tears were blinding me as I read those few brief lines; but how much they conveyed! How they told of the officer faithful to his trust, who had clung to it to the very last, frozen-in there for all those awful months. It seemed at first impossible that they could have borne it; but there it was, all written in his hand; and this last August, just when we were caught in the ice, here, within a few miles of us, were those whom we sought, just setting off upon their homeward journey—to try and make one of the Danish ports.

How those thankful tears streamed down then, as I thought it over that he was alive but a few months since, and within a few miles of me. Where then was my madness now? But what privations they must have endured—what sufferings!

My thoughts took a different current then. I recalled the words of Stephen Ellerby that he had searched along this coast alone. Had he then seen this vessel? He must have seen it; and that was the reason of his stern opposition. He had poisoned the dogs, given the men drink, tried threats and persuasion, and all to prevent our coming in this direction. It was plain enough now, he had seen the vessel, but it must have been from a distance; he

had evidently not been on board, or he would have destroyed or hidden that paper.

It was a peaceful sleep that visited my eyes that night, for there had been food for hope; the horrible uncertainty was partly at an end; there was no mystery concerning the ship; and when I had fought so hard to be true to him I loved, but who knew it not, it was not faith to the dead, but to the living, and he might still be alive. Captain Pash had said that it was quite possible for a party of stout-hearted men to drag their boat upon a sledge over the ice, embark in her when the open water was reached, and then, by scudding along, to reach in safety a settlement from whence they could get a ship to some British port.

Was it wonderful that my dreams should that night be golden and bright? Surely not—and I awoke the next morning light-hearted and fresh, ready to return to our own ship, merely taking with us the document Mark Grant had left.

The journey back over the rugged ice seemed so light—the darkness was nothing now that so bright a light glowed within my breast—I was musing all the way about what he would do if he had reached Hull. Would he embark again, and dare the wintry seas, to come in search of us? Surely not. My hope and trust now were, that he would wait in patience till our return.

The very stars seemed to shine more brightly; there was an elasticity in the air greater than that of yesterday. There was only one drawback, and that was the presence of Stephen Ellerby, whose scowling face seemed constantly to rise before me like that of some evil genius, and I shuddered as I thought of him again and again.

He met us when we were about a mile from the *Ice Blink*, and listened in silence to Mr. Solly's eager tale of our adventures. I saw him glance towards me twice, but I did not turn my head, for it was once more full of the thoughts of Mark Grant and his crew; and I was wondering how they had progressed during their journey over treacherous ice and rough seas, and past capes, where the storms sent the foam tearing furiously over the snow-capped rocks.

I trembled again and again as I thought of the fragile boat in which the journey south would have to be made; and then I prayed that He who had watched over them during the darkness of those dreary months, would have sped them upon their journey home.

CHAPTER XXIII.

NIGHT—night—night—always night, with the cold sometimes down to sixty degrees of frost. But what of that? We had fuel and provisions in plenty, the worst of the winter was past, and it would not be so very long, now, before we might hope to gaze once more upon light, upon the faint dawn in the south, that should herald the approach of day—the day that should once more give us the glorious sunshine.

January passed; and then came February, whose opening days cheered us with a bronze-like glow in the south, a welcome sight which attracted us again and again, as on every clear day it grew stronger.

The very thought of coming daylight seemed to warm the crew into activity; and those who had for weeks past only left the shelter of the deck reluctantly, were amongst the foremost to join the hunting party which now went out daily in search of rabbits, birds, or reindeer.

Brighter glowed the southern sky day by day, till towards the end of the month we who had hopefully gazed upon every glowing tint, joyfully hailed at noontide the gilding of the peaks upon some distant hills.

Again a day or two passed; and, going out upon the ice, we three poor women who had lived these months in darkness stood out to watch for the rising of the sun, gazing with delight upon the gorgeous tints that heralded its approach, and then at last the first bright edge rising slowly, till in a little while the whole of the glorious orb rose above the horizon, for us to bathe exulting in its light—light that renewed our hopes; for although there were months of bitterly intense weather to come before we could be free, yet now the winter seemed to be passed, for there was to be light increasing daily, and the depression of the long awful night was to flee before it.

When I look back to that long black night of months, I wonder now how we could bear it in the cheerful manner we did; and I recall the words of poor Mrs. Pash, as she spoke of my bright light-heartedness, and said that if I had induced them to come out there, I had not failed to perform my part in cheering them through the most painful time.

I was, I believe, with them light-hearted and cheerful; but though neither I nor Ann confided to the other our thoughts, there was the constant dread with us always of Stephen Ellerby, who, quiet and saturnine, seemed to be watching me always, so that I feared to stir.

But though I could be so light-hearted and hopeful, it was not so with Ann. That document told us that captain and mate were alive last year, but no more—there was no mention of crew; and poor Ann grew low-spirited, saying to me that she feared John Berry was numbered with the dead.

I tried all I could to cheer her, but my efforts seemed almost in vain; and she grew more and more depressed, till one day, when a change took place that was almost startling in its suddenness.

There had been, as I have said, regular hunting parties almost daily; and one afternoon, at the beginning of March, I was gazing out at the glorious sunshine in the south—a sight of which I never wearied now—when I saw one of the men running towards me across the ice, gun in hand, as if excited and in distress.

I recognized him as he came nearer—it was the tall young sailor—and his news was that, about a couple of miles away, he and Stephen Ellerby had attacked a bear—the bear was dead, shot through the neck, but Stephen Ellerby was badly torn, and lying bleeding and insensible.

Brunyee was by my side as the man came up, and he looked curiously at me as if reading my countenance.

"You won't go, Miss Jessie?" he whispered. "Why should you go to him?"

I did not answer; but, repugnant as was Stephen Ellerby's presence to me, I felt that now that he was wounded, perhaps unto death, my place as a woman was by his side. I could not conceal from myself that to some extent, I was to blame for his position; and I argued that to leave him now, suffering and bleeding, would be cruel and unwomanly.

It took me but a few minutes to procure some linen for bandaging, and then, with Brunyee and two more of the sailors, I hastened over the ice, Captain Pash and Mr. Solly being both away in search of deer, for fresh provisions were growing scarce.

But little more than half an hour had passed from my first receiving the news before I was kneeling on the snow by Stephen Ellerby's side, staunching the bleeding of his wounds, for he had been badly injured by the bear, which now lay dead a few yards off.

I was not clever at acting the part of surgeon, but I believe I was doing a great deal of good; and if he would only have been silent, I would not have cared; but he was profuse in his thanks, and the way in which he continued to gaze in my eyes troubled me more than I should have liked him to know.

"Don't think you're killed this time, governor, eh?" said Brunyee, rather roughly, I thought.

But Stephen Ellerby made no reply.

"Give me your arm," he whispered; "the faintness has nearly gone off. If you would not mind, I think I could reach the ship now."

I gave him my arm, and he slowly rose and began to walk feebly by my side over the rugged ice, towards where the vessel lay, the huge blocks scattered in every direction preventing us from seeing far.

"This is very good of you, Miss Wynne," he whispered, "and I do not deserve it at your hands; but you always were blessed with the disposition of an angel. Would you mind resting here for a few minutes?"

He pointed to a block of ice; and, still retaining my hand, he seated himself, still gazing up at me in his peculiar, eager way.

"Hullo! who's this a-coming?" said Brunyee, just then.

And he started forward, closely followed by the sailors; for, on the other side of the rugged pieces of ice that shut out our view, there was the barking of dogs, and the rattling, grating noise of a sledge being drawn over the rugged way.

Almost at the same moment Ann—who had followed me from the ship as soon as she heard where I had gone—and a party of what seemed to be Esquimaux from a distance, came into sight in time to see Stephen Ellerby raise my hand to his lips, and hold it there for a moment before dropping it, and then rising to cling still to my arm.

I was so confused and troubled that for a minute or two I could not see what was going on; but I was roused by the angry voice of Ann, who had darted forward, seized one of the fur-clad men, and was shaking him thoroughly, as she exclaimed, with a passionate volubility that was startling—

"You villain, how dare you—how dare you show your face like that! Here was I, ready to pity you, because you seemed so cut up when you went away, and had been unfortunate since; and I came out to try and find you, and what do I find? Why, that you've taken up with a vile common wretch of an Esquimaux woman, that you bring with you to brazen it out to my face. I'm ashamed of you, I am."

"But Ann—Ann, won't you listen to me? You're wrong, indeed you are. That's another man's wife—the wife of one of the best men of the tribe."

"And ten times worse, too," cried Ann, furiously. "You might have been forgiven for marrying a savage woman, who is quite good enough for such as you; but to take up with another man's wife—John Berry, I'm ashamed of you; and I wish I'd never set eyes on you at all."

"You're making a mistake, Ann," was the feeble answer. "But I can't talk to you now, I'm half dead with cold and hunger. We're all half eaten up with scurvy, and we don't deserve this. We found out that there was a ship here, from this woman, whose baby some one cured; and we've journeyed back across the ice to try and reach you—perhaps to die."

Through the mist that was around me, I saw Ann start forward, and throw up her hands, as she gave a wild cry: the next moment she had caught John Berry in her arms as if he had been a boy, and was steadily walking off with him towards the ship—he, poor fellow, too much weakened to resist had he been so disposed.

I said there was a mist floating round me, and each moment it seemed to grow more dense; but, as I stood there, unable to cast off Stephen Ellerby's hand, lest he should totter and fall, I knew that one of the fur-clad men was gazing at me with a wild, reproachful look, that seemed to freeze the very current of my heart, as I stood there, as if petrified.

I wanted to run to him and to cast myself at his feet, asking him to forgive me for sending him away as I had; but I could not stir. I wanted to tell him that we had come these hundreds of miles to try and save him; but I was speechless; for there was the knowledge troubling me that he was seeing me once more with Stephen Ellerby, and that he would think now as he had thought the last time—that cruel time—we met.

If I could have fainted, if my senses would have left me, I should have been glad, if only to have been released from the turmoil of troubled, stormy thought surging through my brain; while, when with a sad, bitter look I saw him wearily turn away, glad apparently to lean upon Brunyee's arm as they went towards the ship, I would have given worlds to have been Ann, who dared to show openly her simple, honest love, making the heart of her chosen one rejoice; while I—I—it seemed as if it was ever to be my luck, to add pang after pang to his breast.

I was a coward, and cruel still—I knew it. But for all that I could not move, could not even speak; and it was all like a misty dream that followed: Mark Grant, muffled in furs like the Esquimaux, bent and helpless, dragging himself along more than walking, by Brunyee's side; the boat on a sledge, that dogs and men had been dragging, to which some more of

our party now attached themselves, so that it moved more rapidly towards the ship; while close by me, with two or three more of her tribe, stood the Esquimaux woman who had once come to the ship.

I suppose the cold was most intense then, but I did not feel it. I did not feel my dread, either, when, with one of their wild cries, the savages started off towards the ice; for my thoughts were centred upon one fact, that I was standing there with Stephen Ellerby; and that after all my toil, agony, and anxiety, it had come to this, that my meeting with him I had sought had been cold and constrained—worse—far worse: I had again stabbed poor Mark, and sent him away believing that this man who held me was my choice.

A shudder of repugnance and despair passed through me then, as Stephen Ellerby spoke, his voice trembling with eagerness; for he had not been slow to detect every change of countenance.

"Are you cold, Jessie?"

I tried to start away from him, and felt ready even to strike at him, as one would, in a moment of despair, strike at some noxious beast that had one in its power; but he held me tightly.

"You will not leave me, Jessie," he cried, imploringly. "You will not leave me here helpless and weak to die. I could not live long out here in this fierce cold."

I knew that; for if he were really as weak as he seemed, and were left out on the ice, helpless and alone, for but a very short time, it would be his death; and I felt that I could not leave him.

Why had all the others gone? Where was Brun-ye?—the young sailor?—Ann?

I knew well enough; and in my madness, if I could, I should have dashed off towards the ship, to try and reach Mark Grant, and tell him all.

But would he believe me? Could he think my words truthful? Would he not judge by what he had seen? He had left me under the impression that I favoured Stephen Ellerby, after my cold and cutting treatment; and now that we met once more, it was to see Stephen Ellerby resting upon my arm—kissing my hand. Then, too, he would find that this man, who held me so tightly, had been my companion through this dreary voyage. Would he then believe that it was all instituted to save him?

That last thought sent brightness, though, through my heart—the voyage had been made to save Mark Grant and his companions, and they were saved.

For it was all plain enough, without the words of John Berry. They had tried to escape with their boats, and had sledged and drawn them over the ice as far as they could, and then, weak and exhausted, they had been compelled to seek for refuge amongst the Esquimaux, where they had learned of our ship, and came to us for help.

Yes, they would be saved now. They were saved, and I had saved them—perhaps my father's vessel as well; and when the summer came, both vessels could be extricated and carried south, where the valuable lading of the *Dawn* would bring joy and gladness to the old people's hearts.

And I?

What was my poor fate weighed in the balance

against that which I had achieved? I had been brave so far, let me be brave to the end!

I seemed to awake from my dreamy thoughts; and, without a word, I walked slowly by Stephen Ellerby's side. He spoke again and again, but I could not answer him; and at last, perhaps unintentionally, his grasp upon my arm grew so hard that it was absolutely painful; and as I, shivering now with dread, turned to meet his gaze, it was to read there such fierce passions—such a turmoil of rage in his pale face—that a new fear assailed me.

There was Mark Grant now on board, and he was weak and helpless with the trials he had passed through; might not he, who, to gain his ends, had poisoned the dogs, be ready to take some cowardly advantage of his rival's weakness?

We must have read each other's thoughts; for, with a wild cry of passion forced from me by the excited state of my feelings, I exclaimed—

"If he died, I would die with him!"

"No," cried Stephen Ellerby, "you will not. But now you have saved his life, you shall promise to be mine. Listen, Jessie, this is a strange place here to woo you, out in this fearful waste of snow and ice; but there must be an end now to all this folly. You were promised to me as my wife. Now, I must have that promise repeated, with a solemn oath that there shall be no change."

I glanced hastily around as he held me tightly, but there was no help near; the ship was not even to be seen for the towering masses of ice on every side. There was a dense mist, too, settling down, which made objects at but a short distance invisible; and a cold feeling of despair once more crept through me, for I began to feel that he whom I had thought so weak and helpless had been assuming much of the feebleness to gain my sympathy and aid.

I had struggled once to free myself from his grasp, but found it vain; and now he was holding me the more tightly.

"No," he said, laughing bitterly, "you cannot get away, and it is no use to look; there is no one near; and if you cry out, they cannot hear at this distance. They are all too much excited about the new-comers; and Captain Mark Grant is, no doubt, relating his adventures. But, now, listen to me," he cried, dropping his sneering tone, and speaking hoarsely. "You have your choice, Jessie, to promise me you will be my wife—and listen," he cried now, pleadingly, "indeed, I will make you a tender, a loving husband! What, repugnant, struggling? Well, let it be so; only recollect, your struggles are in vain. Promise me, or there shall be an end; for I swear that, by the God who made me, you shall never be his! You know what I have suffered for your sake, and all that I have done. Do you think I have followed you through the cold and misery of this voyage to see you in his arms? Once more, will you promise me?"

"No," I cried, hoarsely, as I struggled violently to get free, "I would sooner die!"

"Good, then, you shall die; but such a death as shall be madness to him—to your bold sailor lover, Jessie. For, look here—you see this snowy bed? He shall come with the party of search to-morrow, and they shall find you—he shall find you, if he

cares enough for you to drag his cursed scurvy-stricken limbs across the ice—find you lying peacefully asleep in my arms there, in that pure white, snowy bank of wreaths. Fancy—nuptial bed and winding-sheet in one. But there, don't struggle; you are the weaker; and death comes very tenderly to those it seizes out here in the ice. Fifty degrees of frost, Jessie; death will not be long in coming. What is it to be, then, life or death?"

"Death!" I said, hoarsely.

"Yes," he cried, mockingly; "and Captain Grant's heart? Poor fellow, it will almost kill him. He might get over finding you dead; but think, Jessie—dead in my arms. Better live as my wife."

Was it all fiction—was he not weakened at all by his wounds? The bear had clawed him terribly; but excitement seemed to have given him new strength. Still, it must be evanescent; and if I—weak woman that I was—could but maintain the struggle for but a few minutes longer, I might escape from him.

It seems now like some wild dream, as he caught me in his arms, and forced me farther away from the beaten track. Then I remember struggling with him till his foot caught in a rift, and we both fell heavily; but in an instant I was up again, fleeing rapidly over the rough ice—blindly, too, as the hunted beast—seeing nothing before me, only my pursuer. Where I was going, I knew not; only that it was in a direction that led me farther from the ship—farther from all aid.

But what did it matter? Mark Grant was saved, but he had no faith in me. There was no more hope for me in this world. As Stephen Ellerby had said, Nature was very kind out here, and death would come calmly and gently if I sought him somewhere amidst the cold white snow. All I had to do, then, was to escape, to avoid him. "Heaven give me speed!" I mentally exclaimed as I panted on, but ever with the sound of pursuit close behind.

I tore on madly, with a burning sense of pain in my breast, contriving, too, as I fled, to throw off the heavy skin jacket I wore; but every moment my pace grew slower, and I seemed to make no way. Twice I stumbled, and nearly fell, but despair made me hurry forward again; so that, but for a rapid swerve, I should have dashed myself against a wall of ice in front.

How long was it to last? It was, I know, but a flight of minutes; but it was drawn out by my agonized imagination to hours of torture. I knew that he must be gaining upon me, and that in another moment he would have his fierce hand upon my shoulder, dragging me back, and I should be again in his power.

I did not fear death now; and if I could at this moment have been stricken down, I should have rejoiced; but no—my fate then was to flee, and I fled on, panting and straining every nerve. It was already dark; but there was the glimmering of the ice, and the glint of the stars overhead to guide me clear of the huge fragments ever rising before me. And now I knew that I must have gone in an entirely fresh direction, for in the obscurity nothing seemed familiar.

"Ah!" For the first time, now, I uttered a hoarse,

wild shriek, that I hardly knew as coming from my own breast; for the panting of my pursuer had come nearer and nearer, till I almost fancied that I could feel his hot breath upon my neck. Thus, as I had dreaded, his hand was stretched out, touched me, and in another instant I should have been dragged back, when, as I uttered that hoarse cry, I leaped forward with all my remaining strength, and ran feebly in a fresh direction—ran first swiftly, but soon subsided into a heavy, dragging walk, as my feet sank in the soft snow. And now I knew that all was at an end—that I had struggled to the last, and must succumb.

Step after step—heavy dragging steps for a while—and then there was once more the hard ice; and I strove to run—did run, but in a slow, heavy pace, each breath I drew coming with a gasp; and at the end of another minute I was walking again, and looking back through the dim obscurity for my pursuer.

No—not even the sound of a step. I could neither hear nor see him. Had he, then, run off to the right or left, so as to cut me off by one of the ice crags? Perhaps it was so; but I could hardly even think now; I could only move forward in a stumbling, mechanical way over the rugged ice, farther and farther out into the desolate wilderness—farther away.

Hope did not come even now, though, as the time went on, I felt that he must have missed me, and that I was free to plod on and on till I fell; and then would come sleep; and afterwards—afterwards—

There was but little reasoning power left to me, only the blind determination to proceed, as in my saner moments I had determined. There it all was still; and I had become automaton-like—set to go forward farther and farther into the wilderness, until I fell; and then—the end.

I had escaped him: I knew that—nothing more. The piercing polar wind swept by me, turning to harsh, frozen masses my dishevelled hair, for hood and handkerchief had fallen in my flight. My gloves, too, had escaped from my hands, and they were fast becoming numb and chill. The large, ghostly masses of ice, that reared themselves everywhere on high, seemed to glisten with a pale and ghastly light, which played upon the fantastic shapes around, seeming to give to them life and motion.

Then I think I must have fallen, struggled again to my feet, and gone on for a few yards again; but only to fall once more.

Then for a few moments there was a reaction, the horrible sense of dread returned, and I fancied I heard the panting breath—or was it my own? saw the snow-covered figure in full pursuit; and, in a last effort, I gained my feet, to once more plunge blindly forward—farther and farther—and then all seemed blank.

A SPENDTHRIFT, who had wasted nearly all his patrimony, seeing an acquaintance in a coat not of the newest cut, told him he thought it had been his great-grandfather's coat. "So it was," said the gentleman, "and I have also my great-grandfather's land, which is more than you can say."

Catching an Adder.

MR. SMILES in his new work, "The Life of a Scotch Naturalist," which, on being read by the Queen, resulted in the poor shoemaker naturalist receiving the literary pension of fifty pounds a year, gives the following account of the capture of a viper:—

"During one of his excursions on the hills of Torrie, near the commencement of the Grampians, while looking for blackberries and cranberries, Edward saw something like the flash of an eel gliding through amongst the heather. He rushed after it, and pounced down upon it with both hands, but the animal had escaped. He began to tear up the heather, in order to get at it. His face streamed with perspiration. He rested for a time, and then began again. Still there was no animal, nor a shadow of one.

"At this time another boy came up, and asked—

"What are you doing there?"

"Naething."

"D've call that naething?" pointing to about a cart-load of heather torn up. 'Have ye lost onything?"

"No."

"What are ye looking for, then?"

"For something like an eel!"

"An eel!" quoth the lad, 'do ye think ye'll find an eel amang heather? It's been an adder, and it's well ye have na' gotten it. The beast might have bitten ye to death.'

"No fear o' that," said Edward.

"How long is it sin ye saw it?"

"Some minutes."

"If that's the case, it may be some miles up the hills by this time. Which way was it gaun?"

"That way."

"Well," said the lad, 'you see that heap o' stones up there; try them, and if you do not find it there, you may gang hame and come back again, and then ye'll just be as near finding it as ye are now.'

"Will ye help me?" asked Edward.

"Na, faith, I dinna want to be bitten to death."

"And so saying he went away."

Edward then proceeded to the pile of stones which had been pointed out, to make a search for the animal. He took stone after stone off the heap, and still there was no eel. There were plenty of worms and insects, but these he did not want. A little beyond the stones lay a large piece of turf. He turned it over, and there the creature was. He was down upon it in an instant, and had it in his hand. He looked at the beast. It was not an eel. It was very like an asp, but it was six or seven times longer.

"Having tightened his grip of the beast, for it was trying to wriggle out of his hand, he set out for home. He struck for the Dee, a little below where the Chain Bridge now stands, reaching the ford opposite Dee village, and prepared to cross it. But the water being rather deep at the time, he had to strip and wade across, carrying his clothes in one hand, and the 'eel' in the other. He had only one available hand, so that getting off and on his clothes and wading the river breast-high occupied some time.

"On reaching the top of Carmelite-street he ob-

served his mother, Mrs. Kelmar, and some other women, standing together at the street door. He rushed in amongst them with great glee, and holding up his hand, exclaimed—

"See, mother, sic a bonny beastie I've gotten."

"On looking at the object he held in his hand, the conclave of women speedily scattered. They flew in all directions.

"Edward's mother screamed.

"The Lord preserv's! what the sorrow's that ye hae noo?"

"Oh, Meggy, Meggy," said Mrs. Kelmar, 'it's a snake! Dinna let him in! For ony sake dinna let him in, or we'll a' be bitten.'

"The entry door was then shut and bolted, and Tom was left out with the beast in his hand.

"Mrs. Kelmar's husband then made his appearance.

"What's this, Tam, that has caused such a flutter amongst the wives?"

"Only this bit beastie."

Kelmar started back.

"What, has it not bitten you?"

"No."

"Well," he added, 'the best thing you can do is to take it to Dr. Ferguson as fast as you can, for you can't be allowed to bring it in here.'

"Dr. Ferguson kept a druggist's shop at the corner of Correction Wind, near the head of the green. He had a number of creatures suspended in glass jars in his window. Boys looked in at these wonderful things. They were the admiration of the neighbours. Some said that these extraordinary things had come from people's 'insides.' Tom had often been there before, with big grubs, piebald snails, dragon-flies, and yellow puddocks. So he went to Dr. Ferguson with his last new prize.

"He was by this time surrounded by a number of boys like himself. They kept, however, at a respectable distance. When he moved in their direction they made a general stampede. At length he arrived at the doctor's shop. When the doctor saw the wriggling thing that he was holding in his hand, he ordered him out of the shop, and told him to wait in the middle of the street until he had got a bottle ready for the reception of the animal. Tom waited until the bottle was ready, when he was told that when he had gotten the snake in he must cork the bottle as firmly as possible. The adder was safely got in, and handed to the doctor, who gave Tom fourpence for the treasure. Next day it appeared in the window, to the general admiration of the inhabitants."

SPEED OF THE ELECTRIC CURRENT.—It has often been attempted to measure the speed of the electric current. The return of the earth current, in an experiment, to the very place whence it started—having been to Persia and back, an entire distance of 7,400 miles—was so instantaneous that no name can be applied to it that we could at all comprehend. Electricians have endeavoured to give a measure to the speed of the electric current, and the best thing that they have been able to do is to say that, *at least*, it travels at the rate of 290,000 miles a second; in other words, that it goes a thousand miles in the two-hundredth part of one second of time!

A Happy Home.

"HEALTHY, sir? Why, the place is so healthy that the people won't die."

"Won't die?"

"Fact, sir, I assure you. They started an asylum there for decayed silversmiths and their wives, and they all grew sound again. In fact, sir, heard it whispered that they had to kill them off at last, they lived so long—so as to make room for some of the host of decayed applicants waiting to get into the asylum."

"Subsoil?"

"Gravel, sir. Finest red gravel in the world."

"Water?"

"So pure, sir, that the water companies buy it to mix with that in their reservoirs. One painful purifies a hundred of water companies' water."

"Hard?"

"Oh, dear me, no, sir—soft as silk. It's so soft that the ducks who frequent the pond and river have eider-down instead of the ordinary feathers."

"Well," I said, "I think I'll take the house."

"You'll not regret it, sir, I'm sure."

So I signed the agreement lying on the house-agent's desk, and became the tenant of Myrtle Villa, Belle Vue-road, Eden Park.

I do not think I quite believed all the house-agent said about the health of the place; but the villa suited me as to size; it was a convenient distance from town; and, as middle-class houses are precisely the same, east, west, north, and south of London, it did not much matter where I lived.

Eden Park had its drawbacks. It was certainly a gravel subsoil, but the upper was clay—very sticky clay; and as the roads were not finished, people who walked about seemed to be employed in carrying lumps of clay from one part of the park to another.

Then, too, it was an aggravating place for other reasons. The water may have been softness itself, but it was not pleasant to find that a cat had shuffled off its mortal coil in our cistern, a fact that must have been very far from conducive to health.

I did not find out all the unpleasantnesses of the place at once, but by degrees; though I give them here seriatim.

Before I had been there a month I forgave that cat for drowning itself in our cistern, and even went so far as to leave the lid off, with a full invitation to all the thousands that haunted the neighbourhood to do likewise; but they did not come.

For the wretches serenaded us by night, and scratched up our garden by day, so that it was impossible to keep a bulb covered for more than twenty-four hours at a stretch; and this of course interfered with their growth, for no sooner had a bulb made up its mind to shoot, than in went a cat's set of claws, and out it came.

Gardening was an aggravating pursuit there, not only on account of cats, but of dogs; for no sooner was a bed neatly laid out than every dog in the district felt it to be his bounden duty to come and run all over it, to see if it was finished to his satisfaction.

The ways of gardening were vain there, and the paths made were not paths of pleasantness. Cockneyed people would come and dine at Eden Park,

and think they were in the country, with the consequence that they were plunged into recklessly rural ways.

Summer-houses were put up—why, no one knew; paths were bordered with clinkers, some were paved with wheel shells, while others had been confined to their borders; while the extent to which people would stick up an insane kind of windmill, or a spinning figure of a soldier who was always flapping two little swords about in the wind, was exasperating to a degree.

We were all villas—semi-detached villas; and we all had bay windows. But because a person has a bay window, I ask, is that any reason why he or she should stick a big china vase in that window for everybody to see, and just as if it was something to sell?

I was so cross one day to see a new-comer follow the fashion, and stick a Japan vase, two feet high, right in the centre pane, that I went and annoyed the old lady, asked the price, pretended not to understand her when she said it was not for sale, and ended by bullying her for not putting a ticket on the thing, so that one might know what it was worth, according to its owner's views.

I suppose the place was healthy, but I caught a cold as soon as I went there; and it stayed till I left for a change at the end of a year; and to be just, I never had anything else the matter with me all the time, for there was not room in me for two complaints at the same time.

Washing-day is a common term. Some people wash on Mondays, some prefer Fridays. The Eden Parkers washed all day long, and every day in the week, except Sunday, on which day, the smell of empty coppers and blown-up flues quite made up for the absence of steam.

There were always things hanging out to dry on lines in the people's gardens. They were so many flapping signals of distress to me; and I must confess to feelings of fiendish joy when I saw a clothes line give way, and a row of things go down in the mud.

I could have borne sheets, table cloths, and towels, which flapped and dried, but it was those other things that exasperated me—garments that blew themselves out full of wind, and then swayed like so many gorged bladders that nobody would prick, till I felt that I could bear it no longer. Rows of stockings, too, were an abomination to the eye, and I hated to sit in my back-room and count how many pairs of socks the children at Musk Cottage wore in a week.

The men who sell clothes props, pegs, and lines, know the weakness of Eden Park, and take advantage of it; for there is always one of the fraternity uttering dismal yells in the place.

One fiendish being shouts savagely—imperative mood—"Buy a prop!" and if no one obeys, he roars "Buy a line!" I dare not count up how many times I've been pestered to buy clothes pegs, even though we never wash at home—of course I don't mean personally.

Why should the selling of props, lines, and pegs have such a depressing effect on the vendor, that he always cries—literally weeps—his wares in the most lugubrious of tones? On a wet day, anything more

depressing than these hideous yells cannot be imagined, unless one makes a step in favour of a doleful family who come round with a caravan, drawn by a dejected horse, and sell mats, baskets, and similar wares. These people, in their weird, tortured-spirit style of cry, which is kept up by the whole family, are painful in their intensity, and, but for their keen eye to trade, it might be imagined that they were all sorrowing for the days gone by.

Organs flourish in Eden Park—organs of all kinds, several interesting foreign gentlemen of the circular musical persuasion making the Park their beat; and they favour us with "Madame Angot," varied with hysterical hornpipes, and the last but one new music-hall melody.

Punch came once, but the place was too doleful for him, and he never came again; but it is wonderful how regular were the rates, the water, the gas, and Christmas-boxes. Otherwise, life flowed on in a very placid stream at Eden Park. You gardened, and watched for the germination of seeds that had been scattered to the winds long before; and you waited for the days when the parish was to take the roads and make all smooth.

But the parish knew better, it never took those roads—they were too sticky; so they stayed as they were, and bold was the man who dared ride home in a Hansom cab, and then face that cabman's rolling eye.

"Strikes me, guv'nor," one of them observed to me, after I had paid him his fare in fear and trembling—"strikes me, guv'nor, that this here's the werry blesseddest last place as was ever made, and a good job too, for you'll never ketch me here agin."

I have not the slightest idea what he meant; in fact I think his own ideas were somewhat misty; but that's what he said.

My house is to be let to an eligible tenant, by which I mean one who will pay his or her rent. The place is healthy—see agent's remarks at the beginning—the subsoil gravel, the top soil clay, and the water so soft that the ducks that float on the surface—

Why, of course, that accounts for the washing, so here is additional inducement; never mind the eider-ducks—the water is so soft that the saving in soap and soda is equal to a moderate income.

Who'll take Myrtle Villa, Eden Park?

There are no myrtles, but they can be bought at the florist's in Bung-lane for eighteenpence per pot. Talk about pots, too, there is a flaming new public-house just opened at the corner of the road, where you can read the legend "Prime porter, 3d. per pot in your own jugs."

Who'll take the place—a villa whose salubrious qualities are undeniable?

Remember, only one cold—and I've got it now.

"LOOK-A-HAR," remarked a farmer to the waiter of a main street lunch-room, "your coffee is O. K., your hash is about correct; but aint your eggs a leetle too ripe?"

A BACHELOR who was asked by a romantic young lady "Why he did not secure some fond one's company in his voyage on the ocean of life," replied, "I would, if I were sure such an ocean would be pacific." The scamp knew himself too well.

Collapsing a Landlord.

A BOARDER at a San Francisco hotel thought it prudent to settle terms beforehand, to be sure that his money would hold out—two dollars a day.

He stayed months, and sent for his bill.

Horror! Two dollars a day for board was only a small part of the items charged. Sixty dollars for fire loomed conspicuously, and the boarder demurred.

"Can't help it," said the landlord; "we can't afford to furnish fuel and a man to attend to it for less than a dollar a day."

"All right," replied the boarder, "I'm willing to pay a dollar a day for fire, but don't want to pay for any more than I have had. Now, out of all the time I've been here, it's impossible that I could have had a fire more than half a dozen days in the whole sixty."

"Well," says the landlord, "that's not our fault. The fire was there, and a man to attend to it. You might have used it if you had a mind to."

But the boarder remonstrated still further.

"If you'll come up and look at my room, I think I can convince you that there never has been any fuel there; and what's more," continued he, rising to the sublimity of the situation, "there's no place to put it in if there were. There is no fireplace in the room, and no stove. There's not even a chimney in the room for the smoke to go out of, nor a stove pipe, nor a hole to put a stove pipe."

The landlord collapsed.

The Egotist's Note-book.

THE last piece of strong-minded bosh has been the giving of a banquet to Miss Helen Taylor, congratulatory upon her election to the Southwark division of the London School Board, and there were present plenty of what Mr. Smollett, the member for Cambridge, dubbed feminine men. As a matter of course, there were toasts—sentiment was too plentiful as it was—and, in responding, when her own health was drunk, the lady of the feast is reported, in the *Daily News*, to have pointed out that it was to the mental progress of the mothers that she looked as the most potent influence on human greatness. In the name of common sense, then, why did not Miss Taylor marry and become a mother, go in for mental progress, and exercise her potent influence on human greatness, instead of blessing the London School Board with another petticoat?

The Baroness Burdett Coutts has been writing to the papers on behalf of the birds, and appealing against the fashion amongst ladies of wearing ornamental plumage and brightly coloured birds in their costumes. As well might she advise them to discard flowers, or bright-hued ribbons and silks. No doubt the baroness means well, but these letters which emanate from her pen are very childish; and if they were written by plain Mrs. Smith or Mrs. Tompkins, they would never obtain insertion in the

journal that has the largest circulation in the world. But, of course, as this sympathetic lady objects to ladies wearing the bright plumage of birds, she, on her part, never sleeps in a bed composed of their feathers, or lies under a quilt plucked from the downy breast of the eider; scorns silk dresses, whose fabric has been stolen from the torpid, shivering chrysalis of the unoffending worm; eschews furs stripped from the backs of squirrels, ermine, miniver, or sable; never wears shoes because they are composed of the hides of beasts, and always takes to cotton gloves sooner than carry kids—the skins of some gentle, skipping, frolicsome creatures—most frequently rats; detests all woollen garments, from merino to alpaca, because they are obtained from animals who die, when they are not shorn, that she may be clothed. In fact, it is to be hoped that her ladyship lives happily in cotton, and wears that with compunctions of conscience lest the tender plant should have suffered when its pod was burst, and the delicate down plucked from amidst its leaves. Ah, talk about leaves, how changed we are! Our greatest grandmother—Eve—wore fig leaves, and still she was not happy.

According to Mr. Proctor, the astronomer, not a night passes in which some falling stars are not seen, and in certain months, and on particular nights, the golden rain is incessant. Of course, too, meteors fall in the day-time, although unseen. It is computed that hundreds of thousands of these bodies become incorporated with the earth every twenty-four hours, and 400,000,000 in the course of each year. They may vary in weight between a few grains and a ton. One is known to have fallen in South America which weighed fifteen tons. Yet these small accretions to the earth's matter would take many millions of years to add a single foot to its diameter.

Life in Paris just now exhibits some singular varieties. Morning funerals are fashionable, and it frequently happens that those who "assist" at an interment in the morning are to be found at the theatre in the evening.

"As I left the opera house last night" writes a friend, "I saw the beautiful C in the morning."

"Oh, I played last night, and lost everything. I haven't a sixpence."

"There's your money," said the friend, as he counted it out. "I saw you weren't fit to play."

For a moment the gambler's joy was great; but immediately afterwards he said, with some asperity—

"I haven't much to thank you for. If you hadn't hindered me from playing, I might have won."

At the close of a recent trial, the judge addressed the accused as follows:—

"You have defrauded a jeweller in this city of jewellery worth twelve hundred pounds, a horse dealer of six hundred pounds, and a carriage builder of five hundred pounds. You call yourself a Hungarian nobleman. If you were a nobleman as you say, why did you not exercise your industry on the banks of the Danube? Why did you come to Paris?"

"Ah! my lord," humbly replied the prisoner, "nobody is a prophet in his own country."

Two ragged little urchins were standing in the gutter looking at a lady who had just fallen down on the pavement.

"It isn't so much that I like oranges," observed one of them, "but what a lot of people you can bring down with the peel!"

An accomplished and charming young lady was married by her parents to an old man, who was as disagreeable as he was rich. Grief and melancholy soon brought her to the edge of the grave.

As she lay at the point of death, she resolved to leave all her little savings, amounting to about £1,000, to a young friend, in order, as she said in her will, that the latter, more fortunate than herself, might be able to marry the man of her choice.

And what did the young legatee do but, after a decent interval, marry the old widower!

A clergyman called before him two affianced persons who had been having a little "tiff."

"Do not forget," said he, impressively, "that after marriage the two persons are looked upon as one."

"Good gracious!" exclaimed the young lady. "You can never have been in our neighbourhood; for sometimes, a quarrelsome couple will pass the

and her heroine "Maud," and adopts "Victoria St Clair" for a *nom de plume*, you may know that she is a sentimental young thing of thirty-five, with two corkscrew curls hanging in front of each ear.

At a ball:—

"Mrs. Brown still looks rather handsome, doesn't she, although she's no longer young? How old is she, dear?"

"I don't know her exact age, dear, but she has reached that period when she confesses to thirty."

The president of one of the French provincial tribunals was one evening at a ball, where he met an advocate against whom, earlier in the day, he had given judgment in an important case. The advocate, in consequence, treated him with some coolness.

"Do you attribute your ill-fortune to-day to me?" at length inquired the magistrate.

"Certainly," replied the advocate—"for I had an excellent case;" and he proceeded briefly to explain it.

"You are right," said the judge, when he had finished. "I was entirely mistaken; but never mind, I'll make it all right with you in your next case!"

Two soldiers were seated at a table in a *café*.

"Waiter," cried one, "bring some water."

"Water!" repeated his companion—"what do you want it for?"

"To drink."

"What an idea! Water! Why, if you only get it in your boots, it gives you rheumatics. What will it do, then, if you get it in your stomach?"

For hideousness of sound, a more terrible charge could not be brought against anybody than was under notice the other day, where a respectable-looking woman, who stated that her husband was a lighterman, living at the waterside, Wandsworth, was charged with robbing graves in Brompton Cemetery. It proved, however, that the poor creature, who was of weak intellect, had only taken some violets from one, a shell from another, and some odd flowers. The reporter might have chosen better

to eat of it, resolved to employ a little diplomacy.

"I like that," she said, as she pushed away a plate of meat; "but I don't want it now."

"But if you like it," said her mother, "you must eat it."

"Then what am I to say," exclaimed the defeated Juliette, "if I can't eat what you give me?"

Regularly at ten o'clock every morning, for eight days, a tradesman called upon a young spendthrift, who, from day to day, put off the payment of his account.

"Call to-morrow morning," said he, on the eighth day.

The tradesman, not wishing to offend his customer, remarked that he would call a little later in the day, if that would be more convenient.

"Oh, no," replied the young prodigal, coolly; "call precisely at ten o'clock—that's just the time I want to get up."

"You know I'm to be corporal?" remarked a soldier to one of his comrades.

"Are you sure of it?"

"Of course; my father says so. Here's his letter:— 'My dear son, I'm glad to hear, from your last letter, that you are to be made a corporal?'"

"Yes, but your father is only repeating what you had told him."

"But my father never told an untruth in his life, and if what I say weren't true, he wouldn't repeat it."

Messrs. Hunt and Company have favoured us with specimens of their new patterns in playing cards, and also of their new enamelled-faced Club card, which should be a boon to players; for it is thin, metallic almost in the hand, and, hard-faced as it is, certain to be durable and repel dirt. The new floral and natural history designs chosen by this firm for the backs of their cards are so exquisite in taste, and so beautifully printed, that each card is a work of art of no mean quality.

In the next number will be commenced a new story of romance and life in the Western States.

Si Slocum; or, the American Trapper and his Dog.

CHAPTER I.—IN NEW YORK CITY.

"GET out!"

The speaker was a tall, sallow man of forty, but who looked younger. He was fashionably dressed in an easy *dégaré* style; cleanly shaven, save that he wore a long, drooping moustache; his hair was cropped close to his head, and he looked, with exceptions, as if he had stepped out of the canvas of some old painting of a Spanish nobleman, and clothed himself in nineteenth century costume.

The exceptions were that his dark, flashing eyes were too close together, and gave him a villainous look; and that instead of the calm placidity of the Spanish noble, all hauteur and dignity, he looked like a man who had lived for years in the midst of peril, so quick and energetic were his glances on all sides in search of danger.

A constable, who passed on the sidewalk, looked pretty hard at him, but could not conceive rowdiness existent in the gentlemanly-dressed individual, rolling up his paper cigarette, and he passed on; but somebody else stood fast.

The somebody was a very important somebody, to wit, Jerry Blackburn, a coloured "brudder" as he called himself—a wonderfully sable individual, with hair so curly, and in such tight knots all over his head, that they seemed to have drawn up the skin of his face, holding his eyes, nose, and mouth wide open, and giving him the aspect of always being in a state of wonderment.

Mr. Jerry Blackburn wore the light costume of a pair of loose trousers, a very open shirt, and a more open straw hat—which was so open at the crown that the top looked like a lid with a hinge, flapping up and down, to the thorough ventilation of his Hy-perion curls of wool.

As the head of Jerry Blackburn has been described, it is only fair to describe his feet, which were encased in an enormous pair of highland shoes, also ventilating towards the toes. They certainly were an enormous pair of shoes, extending hugely towards the toes, and also expanding towards the heels. It would be unfair to compare Jerry's lower extremities to sticks stuck in the middle of bricks, but certainly they were not proportioned like those of a Greek statue; and, as to the size of his shoes, there was a reason for their being so large—in fact, they were a very tight fit.

Jerry Blackburn was coming along the sidewalk with a basket over his arm, whistling when he was not singing, and now and then giving a shuffle and a kick in the exuberant happiness of his heart, when he encountered the Spanish looking gentleman, who, without giving the black time to avoid him, administered a rough push, sending Jerry into the road, and exclaimed, impatiently—

"Get out!"

The speaker sauntered on, lighting his cigarette; and Jerry retook his position on the sidewalk, waited till his assailant was out of hearing, and then, puffing out his thick lips, uttered a "phist" like a steam engine.

"Hyar say, you—jess you do dat ah agen. You ugly, yaller face, 'Panish coon. Hyah! You come back I bash you head like pumpkin quash; hit colour genlum like dat."

He brushed his sleeve where it had been in contact with his assailant, puffed two or three times in the peculiar manner adopted by the American negro when he desires to call anybody's attention, and then went on apostrophizing the well-dressed man, who was now seen to turn into a showy-looking building, which stood with open doors ready to swallow any passer by.

"Ah know yer, yer know," cried Jerry again, indignantly, "big as yer am. I mark yer ugly yaller face and 'traight ha'r. Yer t'ink yer go ride ober ebbery colour genlum yer meet in 'treet. Yah! Ah see yer—goin' in euchre shop, play poker, an' drink brandy smash. Who car' for you?"

Jerry turned, gave his basket a hitch, and walked on muttering indignantly—

"Wonder what 'tuff him t'ink him made on—hit colour pusson dat way. I know um. Big manager clerk at Mass' Townsend, where Mass' Si Slocum look after de outside tackle, and de horse. I keep my eye on him. Wonder whar he get de money play poker, an' drink brandy smash in de middle ob de day 'fore dinner. Golly, what a row dar be. Hyar's Mass' Si Slocum dinner in de baskit, and de missis waiting."

Jerry Blackburn increased his pace, not by walking faster, but by pushing his great feet out a little farther one from the other as he took his steps, and the consequence was that in half an hour he came in sight of a comfortable-looking house in a more open part of the city, where there was an attempt made at a garden in front, flowers in the window, and at the side a bit of an approach to country life in the shape of a hen-house, stabling, and open straw-strewn yard, in which were several horses.

At the door stood a pleasant-faced, comely looking woman, looking something like a young farmer's wife from the country, slightly glazed with a dash of town-life dress and customs.

Jerry saw the lady watching for him, and, muttering the one word, "Golly!" pulled out a piece of red cotton rag, and began to wipe his face, pulled off his old straw to fan himself, and, in other ways, on approaching, showed that he had been exerting himself to his utmost to get home.

"Jerry, you lazy, good-for-nothing!" cried the lady, catching Jerry by the ear as soon as he came within reach, "here, I reckon yew've just been two hours gone for that thar steeake, and here yewre master will be home in ten minutes for his dinner, and nothing ready."

The lady spoke in a most unmistakable twang; and, as she dragged Jerry into the house with one hand, she seized the basket with the other, dragged out the steak, flapped it into a pan that stood ready by a clear fire, and, in a moment or two, it was hissing over the fire.

"Golly! missis," cried Jerry, glancing at the comfortably spread table and general indications of readiness; "you is all ready."

"Ready, you tiresome old cuss; how can I be

ready, except with my chores, when you didn't bring the steeake? I've a good mind to—"

She made a threatening gesture at Jerry with the fork she held in her hand; but a good-humoured smile twinkled at the corners of her red lips.

"Oh, lor," groaned Jerry, flinching, and holding his hands and arms up to protect his woolly head, "look at dat ar; when dis chile fight like bull-dog, save de 'teak, and nearly get killed."

"Nearly got killed, Jerry!" exclaimed his mistress.

"Yes, missis," cried Jerry, rolling his eyes. "Ah come 'long quiet-like wid de 'teak, and I meet big 'Panish-looking ruffium rowdy cuss wid big 'volver an' bowie knife, and he 'top me in de sidewalk.

"Hyah, you black niggah," he say, 'give me dat 'teak.'

"I say, 'Nebbah, sah. Dat 'teak 'long to Missis Ruth Slocum, and she go' to cook him for de dinner ob Massa Si Slocum, sah.'

"I know um," he say; 'he work for Massa Fuller Townsend, de mercham, and I gib um de knife nex' time I see um.'

"Good gracious!" cried Ruth Slocum, staring at the black.

"Gib me de 'teak, you black 'tief," he say.

"Nebbah, sah, I cry 'gain; and den he go for me, and we fight and 'truggle for half-hour, when dis chile come off triumpham; and, missis, de 'teak's burning."

Ruth dashed the fork into it, gave it a turn, and then gave Jerry his turn.

"Neow, yew look ye here, Jerry—yewre a telling me a pack of lies, and I don't believe a word yew say. As soon as Si comes in, I shall tell him every word yew say, and make him inquire into this; and, if he finds out it's all lies, he'll horsewhip yew as sewer as yewer name's Jerry Blackburn."

"Oh, goramighty, missis, don't tell Massa Si, please don't, and ah'll say anything yew like," cried Jerry, in alarm, "only don't tell."

"Then it was all stuff 'bout that thar Spanish ruffian?"

"Little bit was, missis; only little bit."

"Go along, yew idle rascal," cried Ruth, angrily. "Thar, be off, and get them horses haltered up, and feed the mustang, and mind you come in for the bits for Jack."

There was the rattle of a chain heard here, followed by the baying of a deep-throated mastiff dog.

"Jack hear de missis pretty voice talk about bits," cried Jerry, grinning.

"None of yewre soft soap, Master Jerry," cried Ruth, sharply. "Now, be off."

Jerry, who looked terribly crestfallen, was shuffling out of the room when a pretty, bright little fellow about six years of age, dressed in the regular Yankee style of loose shirt, trousers with their ends tucked into his little boots, and broad-leafed, soft hat, darted into the room.

"Hallo, Jerry!" he shouted, gleefully, in his infantile treble. "Give me a ride, Jerry."

"Dat ah will, Mass' Freddie—hyah, hyah!" cried the black, clapping his hands on his knees, and grinning with genuine pleasure as he gazed in the boy's open face. "Golly, what a boy 'tis," he continued, going down on his hands and knees, when

the little fellow nimbly mounted. "Gee, william—cuckets—ck—ck—ck. 'Tick yer knees in, Mass' Freddie, and I teach you ride de mustang."

"Ck—ck," cried the boy, drumming the black's ribs with his heels.

And they proceeded towards the door.

"No, Jerry," cried Ruth; "don't you put that boy on the mustang without his father's there."

"Lor, missis!" cried Jerry, rising so suddenly that, but for the boy's address, he would have been thrown off. "Why, de mustang and me lub dat chile; so we cut off our hands—legs—um all de same—sooner dan he be hurt."

"There, be off with you," cried Ruth, whose steak wanted a fresh turn.

And Jerry went down again on his hands, gave a clumsy kick, and bore the boy off in triumph.

"A lazy, good-for-nothing cuss," cried Ruth Slocum, impatiently. And she stabbed the steak savagely with the fork she held. "But, thar, he's got his good pyntes; and he must love Freddie, or the boy wouldn't be so fond of him."

A whinnying noise, and a burst of childish laughter, followed by the baying of a dog, made her run to the door.

"Gracious!" she cried, "he's perched up alone on that mustang galloping round the yard, and that black cuss has let Jack loose. The boy will break his neck. Here, Jerry, Jerry!"

"Ah right, missis. Mass' Freddie 'tick de mustang like glue. Hyah, hyah!—him de boy to ride."

"That's right, Freddie; knees more, boy," cried a cheery voice. "Off again!"

The next moment an edition of little Freddie—brown, stalwart, broad-shouldered, and with muscles showing everywhere—was in front of Ruth Slocum, hugged her, and gave her a mighty kiss, which echoed from the ceiling.

"Oh, Si, Si, that boy will break his neck."

"Bah!" ejaculated Si. "Do you want him to grow up soft, and only fit to work a sewing machine? Let him alone."

As he spoke, there came the hearty laughter of the child, the thuds of the mustang's hoofs on the straw in the yard, and Jerry's cries through the open door, preceded by a great, fawn-coloured, big-jowled mastiff, who tucked his muzzle into his master's hand, and blinked; while the trapper seated himself, looked in his wife's face, and said, laughing—

"Ree-uth, old gal, I reckon thar won't be much gravy left in that thar stee-ake, and can't say as I like 'em dry."

CHAPTER II.—SI SLOCUM TEW HUM.

RUTH SLOCUM gave her husband an affectionate box on the ears, ran to the fire, and in a few moments she had the hot, savoury dinner ready for him; had snatched away his hat and whip, thrown them on a side table, and then seated herself opposite to him.

"Haden't you best call in Freddie?" said Si, with his mouth full of bread.

"No, he has had his dinner," cried Ruth. "Now, yew get yewres. Yew look hot, tired, and hungry."

Si filled his wife's plate and his own, and then proceeded to eat slowly, pausing now and then to

give a morsel to the dog, and a potato to a horse which thrust its head in through the yard door, to utter an impatient snort.

"Mind, it's hot, old girl," said Si, as he smoothed the velvet muzzle and pulled the long forelock of the handsome, wild mustang; and then he sat back in his chair and sighed.

"Why, what is the matter, Si?" cried Ruth. "Aint yew well?"

"Well enough in body," he said, drearily. "Say, Rewth, I'm 'bout tired of this."

"Tired of what?"

"This teown life. It don't suit 'me, and things are all wrong."

"All wrong? What do you mean? Where?"

"Up at old Townsend's."

"Sewerly not," cried Ruth. "Oh, my poor Miss Kate!"

"Yew're poor Miss Kate! Why, what is she to yew?" said Si.

"Oh, don't talk like that, Si!" cried his wife, "but tell me what's the matter."

"Why, the matter's this," said Si, impatiently, as he handed the rest of his steak to the dog, who ate it without a murmur. "We've been here now, Rewth, four years—town life—because you thought it time we left the wild trapping life out west, and became civilized."

"Yes," said Ruth, quietly.

"Cuss civilization!" cried Si.

"Si!" exclaimed his wife.

"I say, cuss civilization!" he went on, angrily, "when it requires a man to sneak, and shuffle, and spy, and dodder about. I hate it—I'm sick of it."

"But Mr. Townsend's been very kind to you, Si."

"Kind? Not he. He lets me live in this house, and pays me so many dollars a month to do so much work. He finds me a useful man to see to his horses, and superintend his lading, and take care here of the yard and such live stock as he's got. Some men would think it heavenly. I think it the tother."

"Ah, Silas, you're out of sorts, and cross," said Ruth, seating herself on his knee.

"Not with you, lass—not with you," he said. "But is this a life for me—to sell myself for so many dollars a month, when out thar in the wilds I could be free to range the land, have my own ranch and cattle, and gallop off every morning with my rifle on my arm, and Freddie on a pony by my side."

"And not know when you come back whether your ranch hadn't been burnt up, and your wife carried off by horrible Indians or some of the wild desperadoes who infect the borders," said Ruth, quietly.

"No, no; not so bad as that, Rewth," he cried. "There's Jack to protect yew; and when I married yew, my lass, those eyes were no brighter than they are now; and then you could have put a bullet with yew're rifle threw an ace of diamonds at forty paces. Now, Rewth, my gal, it wouldn't be safe for Mexican half-breeds or slouchers to come nigh my ranch while I was out."

Ruth sat in silence for some moments, and then, throwing her arm round his neck, she exclaimed—

"Si, when I married yew it was because I loved yew; and I said to myself he's my world, and I'll

follow him wherever he goes. I'm ready to pack up to-morrow—to-day if you like, and we'll go back to the wilds."

"That's spoken like my own brave little woman," he cried, embracing her with fervour. "But it isn't like that, my lass; I'm not going to rush off all at once, and I reckon I should be a fool to crush up a comfortable home without some good reason just because I fancy a roaming life. No, my gal, 'twouldn't be fair to yew and the boy; but things arn't comfortable with the boss, and if they dew go wrong why I sha'n't look out for another location here, but pull up stakes, and we'll make tracks for the far west."

"That's my own brave Si," she cried, wiping the tears from her eyes; "and go we will. I shall be sorry to leave, because I've got to like Patsy, who comes in to help me."

"A good little lass," said Si.

"And Miss Kate, bless her."

"Yes, she's nice—very nice," said Si. "Too nice."

"Too nice?" cried Ruth.

"Yes," said Si. "She's a pretty blossom, and she attracts the wasps to get her honey."

"Do you know them?" said Ruth.

"I know that young Wallace Foster's dead nuts on her, and so's our beautiful half Spanish gentleman clerk, Mr. Vasquez; hang him, how I do hate that man."

"Why?" said Ruth.

"Why? Don't know, but I do. I always hate him. He gives me the creeps, and I feel as if I should like to draw a bead on him, and hit him between them two ill-looking eyes of his; and that would be a close shot, for they're pretty nigh one another."

"But, Si, he never did you any harm."

"Oh, yes, he did," said Si, doggedly.

"Where—when?" cried his wife.

"Don't know—can't tell," said Si; "but I always feel as if he'd done me some mortal injury, and I hate him for it."

"That's foolish, Si," said Ruth; "but do you think he wants Miss Kate?"

"I'm sewer of it; and he's got his knife into young Foster."

"You're quite right, Si," said his wife.

"Eh?"

"I say yew're quite right. Mr. Vasquez does want Miss Kate; and her father favours his suit, while she hates him."

"Phew!" whistled Si. "And pray how dew yew know all this?"

"Miss Kate confided in me, and told me all about it."

"And now yew've turned matchmaker, eh?" said Si. "Rewth, Rewth, I wouldn't have thought it of you."

"Oh, Si, don't talk like that. Now, suppose the poor, dear young thing had come to yew crying and sobbing, saying she had no mother to fly to, and telling yew how her father insisted upon her receiving that dreadful Vasquez's addresses, and begging yew to help her, what should yew have done?"

"Kissed the poor little dear," said Si, with his eyes twinkling.

"For shame, Si," cried his wife. "Now, yew wouldn't have done anything of the kind."

"I would, yew bet," he said, laughing—"like a father, of course."

"Don't talk stuff, Si," cried Ruth; "and now look here—I'm going to confess I've let Miss Kate come here sometimes, and—"

"Young Wallace Foster's dropped in by accident, eh?" said Si. "I see. Well, yew're a-going it, young woman, I reckon; and old Townsend 'll come down like thunder upon me for it some day, if we don't come to a reow about something else."

"Oh, I hope not, Si," cried his wife; "but you'll forgive me?"

"Forgive yew; why, don't you always dew jest as yew like? But look here, Rewth—things is wrong our way. Money's being missed, and—"

"Well, go on," cried Ruth, encouragingly.

"Well," he said, "I think some of 'em's going to try and fix it on me."

"On you!" cried Ruth, "oh, stuff! Every one who knows Si Slocum would say he couldn't take a cent that wasn't his own."

"Yes, that's it," said Si, drily; "but then in this here little universe of ours there happens to be jest a few—say a score or two of people who don't know Si Slocum, and that's where it is."

"But, Si, about this missing money—you don't think Vasquez—"

"Vasquez hates me," said Si, "and I hate him, so I won't think he could have anything to do with it. I'd never try to fix a suspicion on an enemy, because I couldn't judge him fair. But how I do hate him! Rewth, did I ever tell you how I came to take dislikes to people?"

"No," she said, wonderingly.

"Then," he said, rolling himself up a cigarette, for which she fetched him a light, "I will."

Ruth settled herself on a chair by his side, and as he went on speaking in a calm, low, deliberate voice, like a peaceful accompaniment to his wild narrative, there came from the yard of his happy little home the loud, ringing laugh of his child, the rough chuckle of the black, and the whinnying of the horse mingled with the barking of the dog.

"Ruth," said Si, quietly, "I never told you much about my past life."

"No," she said—"and I was always afraid to question you—it seemed to trouble you so."

"No wonder," he said, between his teeth. "You know I was early left an orphan, and that I was pulled up, dragged up by anybody; getting, at last, with all a boy's delight, amongst a parcel of trappers, who taught me to ride, and shoot, and swear."

"Which last you have now quite forgotten how to do, Si," said Ruth, gently.

"I don't know," said Si, grimly. "There's no saying how crooked and three-cornered the words might come, my lass, if I was much riz; but let that be. Rewth, my gal, as far back as I can recollect, I was a bit of a thing like our Freddie—smaller—and I can recollect, down in the hot south-west, my father—a tall, handsome fellow, with an eye like a hawk; and my mother, one of the sweetest, gentlest creatures ever seen."

"I can always shut my eyes, now, of a night, and

fancy myself back in my little bed, with her leaning over me to kiss and say a few words; and all that time seems like a golden patch of sunlight seen at the bottom of a black wood, where all's dark and dismal. Ah, Rewth, lass, that was a bright time, and it soon came to an end.

"Down in that lawless place where we lived, it was every man for himself, and for that which belonged to him; and, if his hand wasn't strong enough to keep it, you bet he didn't keep it long. Well, it wasn't likely that a man like my father, living amongst Spanish-American half-breeds, and some of the wildest rowdies, could have a beautiful wife without her catching the fancy of some one amongst them; and so it was that one man—curse him, I pray I may some day have him by the throat."

"Si, Si!" exclaimed his wife.

And then she started as she saw how the veins were swollen in her husband's temples, and how his eyes blazed with fury.

"Ruth," he went on, "that scoundrel laid himself out to watch my father's absence from home, and whenever he was safe away he would come to our place."

"Scores and scores of times—little fool that I was—have I sobbed and roared because my mother would not let me go with my father, because, poor thing, she wanted to keep me with her, feeling protection in her loneliness in the society of her child; and she always insisted on keeping me with her."

"That scoundrel, whom I can only recollect as a Spanish-looking fellow, young and dark, used to come with excuses, bringing me presents—fruit and the like—and there was always another scene when he had gone, for I recollect my mother used to passionately tear them away and throw them from the window, making me cry again with disappointment."

"I was so young then that I couldn't know; but it seems that after trying cajolery and all the cunning of an artful scoundrel to win over my mother, he grew tired and took to threats, promising the poor woman that if she did not flee with him she should see her husband brought home a corpse."

"She appealed to my father and told him her dread, begging him to leave the place and take us to some new home; but he only laughed, and promised her to see that she was annoyed no more."

"Ruth, he was a stern, determined man, and no sooner did he awake to the fact that the wife he loved had been insulted by a scoundrel than he took his precautions."

"I remember it all as well as if it was yesterday. It was a hot afternoon, and I was kneeling down by my mother, looking at a book, when this fellow came in. I only remember him as a dark-eyed man with a gay red sash round his waist full of pistols and knives, and a showy scarf over his shoulder, all bright stripes, and hanging down to his feet."

"I remember, too, that when he took off his soft broad felt hat he had on a scarlet silk cap beneath, and that he was smoking."

"As he entered, he threw me a bird, all golden green in its feathers, to take my attention; and, catching my mother's hand, he forced her to sit down by him, while he began talking to her eagerly; when suddenly she uttered a wild cry, started up,

and struggled to get loose; but he threw his arm round her, and laid his hand over her mouth to silence her screams.

"I wasn't so big as our Freddie, but I flew at him like a little tiger, when, with a kick, he sent me sprawling in a corner, half stunned and helpless.

"Just then my mother tore the hand from her lips, and uttered a loud cry for help; and the next moment I saw my father come in at the window with a bound, catch the scoundrel by the throat, and, as my mother staggered away, my father strove to force his enemy against the wall."

Si stopped short, his veins throbbing in his temples, and his face purple with the suppressed emotion that was beaming through his eyes.

Ruth grew alarmed, rose, and laid her hands upon his shoulders; but he took them, and held them fast in a grip that gave her intense pain, though she never moved a muscle, as he went on—

"Poor fellow! he hadn't to fight with a man, but with a Spanish wild cat, or rather a snake; for the scoundrel twined round him, and, before he could get a better hold, there was a flash in the bright sunshine streaming into the room, and my father staggered back, with his enemy's knife buried to the hilt in his breast; while then I saw, as I cowered in my corner, hardly understanding what it all meant—I saw the scoundrel step back, pull out his revolver, and cock it, when, just as he was in the act of firing, my mother sprang forward, and threw herself on my father's breast.

"There was the sharp explosion of that revolver and a strange, gurgling cry, followed by a heavy fall of two bodies, and then by a rush of feet to our door, for the people outside were alarmed.

"I can just recall the devilish face of that man as he turned for a moment and looked down on those he had injured. Then, as my father struggled up on one arm, the villain fired at him again, and he fell back—dead.

"The next moment the wretch dashed to the window and leaped out, followed by a couple of revolver bullets fired by those who had run in too late to help their neighbours.

"There was a crowd in the room directly, and I saw them lift both my father and my mother; while a woman, who was crying bitterly, came and lifted me up and bore me into the next room, where my poor mother was lying all dabbled in blood.

"She looked at me in a way that frightened me, and then held me tightly in her arms for a moment.

"Those arms then loosened me suddenly, and I was kneeling wonderingly on the bed with half a dozen neighbours looking on—wondering, indeed, for my poor little brains were called upon to understand something very hard, and that was how, in a few short minutes, I could have been made an orphan.

"I know I began to cry; and just then a dark, swarthy-looking young Mexican took hold of my hand, and led me into the next room, saying—

"Never mind, little one, I'll try and be a father to you."

"And I went to sleep at last, worn out with crying, on his breast."

"And that was Zavala?" said Ruth, in a husky voice.

"Yes," said Si, "that was Zavala; and, as far as he could, he did protect me like a father. I had a message from him only to-day, wishing I'd come back to the free life."

"And that's one reason why you're unsettled, Si?"

"That and the queer goings on up at the house. Ah, Rewth, my mother's beauty was a curse to her."

"Si, why didn't you tell me all this before?" said Ruth.

"Why? Because it tears me to pieces to think of it all, and sets me longing to meet that man face to face. Why? Because I married a beautiful young gal, and lived out in wild places, and didn't want her to fancy that our boy might be witness to such a scene. Why? Because—"

Jerry's woolly head was thrust into the room.

"Massa Si, here dat ugly lookin', yaller 'Panish chap from Massa Townsend, and he say him want to peak to you pertickler."

A Day with the Ducks.

I HAD the good fortune once to make one at a water battue in the South of France.

The French, it is well known, have very different ideas of sport to us ancient Britons, for they make larks and thrushes the objects of special shooting parties, and fish for frogs.

Towards the mouth of the Rhône the river widens out into magnificent lakes—I say magnificent, from a sportsman's point of view—lakes which abound in sedges, rushes, and reeds, and afford abundant cover for wild fowl.

Those who have seen the Norfolk Broads will have a very good idea of the kind of stretch of water I mean; and these lakes, at certain times of the year, absolutely swarm with wild fowl—ducks of all kinds, and visitors from the sea, whose names I am unable to give.

I happened to be visiting a gentleman who had an estate in the neighbourhood of one of the largest of these lakes, of which he had the honour of being the proprietor, and he invited me to join in the duck-shooting expedition.

I was only too glad to agree, and the party was fixed for the next day but one.

In the interval, my host gave me a long lesson on the difference between the wild duck proper and those which he dubbed foulques, morelles, and macreuses, these latter being birds which lived both in the salt and fresh water.

It was all one to me, for I thought of little else than displaying my marksmanship, and took especial care to have ready my double breech-loader and an ample supply of cartridges.

I was called early on the morning of the shooting party, and, to my surprise, found that a tremendous breakfast of solids was prepared, and knives and forks placed ready for some five-and-twenty visitors.

"It is to be a strong party, then," I said.

"Oh, yes," replied my host; "we always make up twenty or thirty, and there will be hundreds of birds for every gun. By the way," he added, "eat a good, hearty breakfast, and don't be afraid of the wine."

"Why?" I asked.

"Because the lake lies in the midst of low, swampy land, that is often flooded by the river; and agues and low fevers are often caused by a visit to them."

"If eating a hearty meal will keep them at a distance," I said, with my mouth full, "they shan't have the vestige of a chance of approaching."

The guests dropped in pretty quickly, for the most part businesslike fellows in appearance, and soon after, the feeding and conversation became general.

At last we started, and an hour's drive brought us to the edge of a wide lake, fringed with sedge; and at the first glance I saw every here and there patches upon the smooth surface, which were wild fowl, and I soon became aware of the fact that there were thousands upon thousands paddling about, or rising to have a flit round, and settle once more.

Waiting for us were plenty of boats, each with a stout pair of rowers; and, according to arrangement, we were told off in pairs, my host and I occupying the first boat.

Right away across the lake I could just distinguish a similar party to our own, evidently preparing to start; and, at a given signal, both parties set off, an old fellow in a quickly rowed boat taking the lead, and going straight for a great cluster of wild fowl lying out in the centre.

This I learned was the custom. He was the leader, and not a shot was fired until he had had first blaze with the monstrous duck-gun he carried.

I must confess to feeling a certain amount of impatience, for our men lay on their oars, and the other boats got in front of us.

"This is tiresome," I said, petulantly.

"Not at all," said my host. "You'll have as many to shoot at as they, and as owner, I am obliged to be civil to my guests."

Boom! went something then.

It was the leader's long gun, and as he fired, I saw him go backwards, with his heels up, down into the bottom of the boat, from which he got up rubbing himself gently—for that gun had kicked, and, judging from its appearance, I would as soon have let off a small cannon.

But that shot! As he had approached, flight after flight of birds had got up, and wheeled over-head; for the ordinary wild ducks were so shy that they seemed to smell powder, and soon placed a respectable distance between themselves and anybody whom they saw carrying a gun.

Not so, however, some of the other kinds; for the surface of the lake was dotted with dead and wounded birds, and then a perfect cloud rose up, broke into other clouds, and began wheeling round and round in all directions.

Some settled here, some there; but none went right away, and the lake seemed to be alive with flying and settling wild fowl, startled by the firing of that one piece.

They were to be more startled soon; for this being the signal agreed on, every boat was urged forward, and five minutes after, as the ducks rose, instead of flying from us, they came directly over our heads, and a tremendous fusillade began.

Every man carried the piece that was most satisfactory in his own eyes, and the variety of reports—pip-pap!—crick-crack!—bing-bang!—boom!—was

startling. Many a gun discharged its contents doing no injury to the wild fowl, but many did; and in a short time from forty to fifty guns were blazing away, the birds falling so fast that it literally seemed to rain them.

Two fell in our boat, and as many struck me; while the curious part of it, to me, was that, instead of our incessant firing driving the birds away, it only seemed to confuse them; for they flew over us, round us, and came back again and again.

A great deal of this was, no doubt, due to the fact that they were at first taken between two fires, and driven from one to the other, and the effect of the first shock was to so scare them that they did not afterwards recover their *sangfroid*—for being French fowl that must be the proper term to apply to them.

After a time I really became tired of what was a regular butchery, and stood looking on, or directing the boatmen to pick up a dead bird here and there, and put it out of its misery.

And now I must own to beginning to suffer a feeling of nervousness, for some of the sportsmen displayed so wild a desire to load and fire rapidly that I became fearful lest a mistake might be made, and a charge of shot intended for some unfortunate duck should be urged into the unoffending body of some spectator—perhaps mine.

At last we did have an accident; for one energetic Frenchman, who kept on loading and firing at a terrible rate, and who always made a point of grinning fiercely as he rammed his charge of powder home, made a terrible mistake. In fact it seemed that, like the Irish soldier of old, he kept on loading and, as he imagined, firing, and his piece did not explode till three charges were inserted in the barrel of his great-bore duck gun, when all went off with a terrific bang, which was followed by a splash, and the Frenchman's place in the boat became vacant till he rose to the surface and was fished out with a boat-hook, looking the very picture of mud and misery, having made his backward plunge in a shallow part.

I shall never forget the aspect of that Frenchman as he sat dolefully in the boat wringing his coat and grinding his teeth with rage, because the occupants of other boats laughed at him.

"You seem tired, Smith," said my host; and, on my owning to the soft impeachment—"What do you say to a try after the birds out there?"

"Anything you like," I said.

And he ordered his men to row after a large flock of wild fowls in a distant part of the lake, where they had stayed undisturbed, never once attempting to rise.

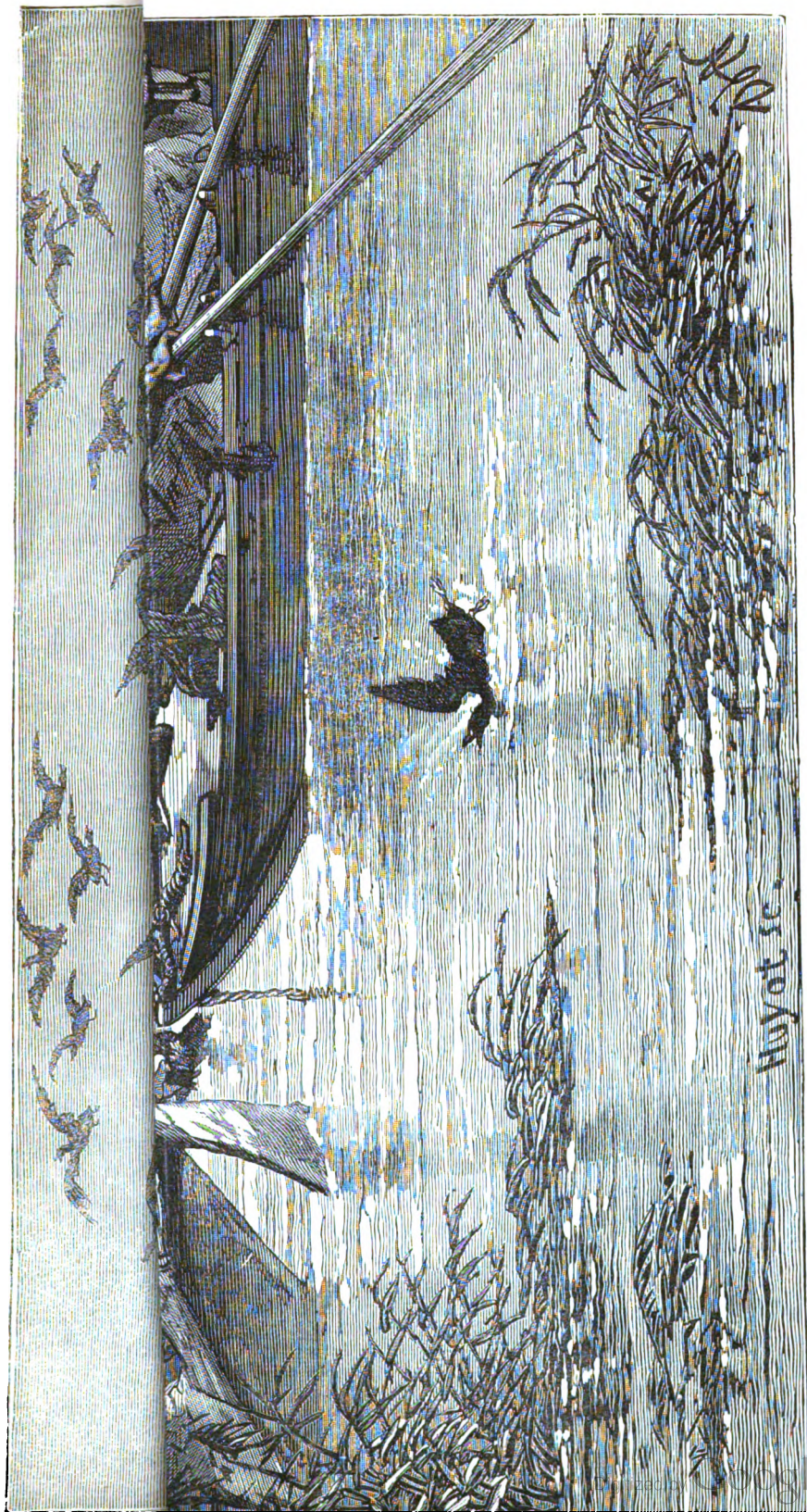
These, my friend informed me, were choice morsels for the table; but, being harder to obtain, the ordinary shooters went in for those of which they could make the largest bag.

I loaded ready, and we were very cautiously rowed towards the flock, getting nearly within shot.

"Be ready," said my friend, "and fire at them upon the water."

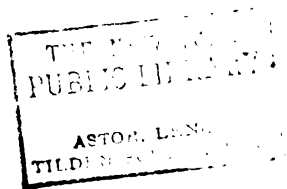
"Ready," I responded.

And the men gave four short, sharp pulls, and then allowed the boat to drift on by the impetus they had imparted.



"A DAY WITH THE DUCKS."—(Page 321.)





I was admiring the wild fowl, gun ready; and then, raising it to my shoulder, was about to fire at one superb male, glistening in his head feathers, and knowing that I should be sure to hit half a dozen more, when—piff!—rush!

There was not a bird to be seen.

Not that they had taken flight; but, with a rapidity that was astounding, they had all dived, and there was not a vestige of the flock.

"Now, then, be ready," cried my friend. "Aim—fire!"

"Where?—where?" I cried, excitedly.

"There!—there!" he exclaimed, "on either side."

It was very easy to talk; but all I saw on either side was a little disturbance of the water, and I could do nothing.

"When will they come up again?" I said.

"They have just been up," said my friend, "only you would not fire."

"Nonsense! I would have fired, only they did not appear."

"They thrust their necks out, breathed, and were gone again," he said. "There, look! There they are. Don't you see?"

"How absurd!" I exclaimed, as I just caught sight of a little disturbance in the water, and then once more all was still.

"They'll keep on diving like that," said my friend, now almost laughing; "and it requires a sharp eye and no little judgment to catch them just as they rise. Now, be ready and try."

I did try—firing just as the water rippled; but either I was too soon or too late, for not a bird floated; and it was not until my host brought his gun into play that any of the pretty divers were brought to bag.

I was more successful after a few misses, falling gradually into the knack of firing at the right time; but anything more rapid than the habits of these birds it has never been my fortune to encounter, for they would be seated quietly on the surface one moment, and gone the next like a flash.

As for their powers under water, I saw them pass beneath the boat several times, swimming, or rather appearing to fly through the water, for they used their wings as well as their feet.

When we were tired of firing at the divers, we returned towards the party, and found them firing away; but they now gave up, and a general hunt with boats ensued after the wounded birds, which had flapped their way to the edges, and taken refuge amongst the reeds.

Scores of these were obtained; but I am afraid a great number of the poor wounded creatures were left to die.

At last the men had got all the trophies together, and "homeward" was the word, when we were again most sumptuously treated by our host, who dined us well; and then, over the cigars and coffee, each man told of his feats—the wet gentleman, who had been well dried, being loudest in his declarations of the numbers he had brought down.

"He's a bit *grisé*," said my neighbour, however—*grisé* being the French for slightly "on," as drinking people term it—excited with wine; "he hardly shot a bird, but kept blazing away with that old

bomb of his, till the place was foggy with powder smoke."

Just then the manager of the wild fowl battue made his appearance—the old gentleman, in fact, who had the first shot, and went backwards in his boat.

"Well, Pierre," said our host, "how many birds have come to our share?"

"Seven hundred, monsieur. I am sorry we have had such a bad day."

"Better luck next time," said my host; "take a glass of wine, Pierre."

"Thanks, monsieur."

"And see that every gentleman has as many as he cares to take."

"Yes, monsieur."

"And let the others be sent into town at once."

"Yes, monsieur."

"Into town at once," I thought to myself. "Well, then, they will not be wasted, and out of the thousands I saw these will not be missed. Besides which, ducks are capital eating and good for food."

In this way I reconciled my conscience to the somewhat wholesale slaughter I had witnessed; though, after all, I don't see why one should pity birds and see myriads of fish netted without a sigh.

Three Hundred Virgins.

A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS.

CHAPTER XXVII.—FINDING A TREASURE.

MARY uttered a shriek of dismay, and started in pursuit; but she could not have saved the poor fellow from a fearfully sudden death.

He had not far to go, and, though he staggered, he ran rapidly. In another moment he would have plunged into the fiery death that awaited him; but he caught his foot against the hatchet, as it lay in his way, and fell headlong, rolled over, and was within a couple of yards of the fire, when Thello darted forward and caught him, dragging him back, and thoroughly mastering him in his efforts to get free, till, utterly wearied out, Laurent sank into a stupor-like sleep.

"He gone off him head, ma'am, Mary Dance," he said to the weeping girl. "Nuff make any white man go off him chump. Nuff make colour genlum lose him presence of mind—and him got much stronger style ob head."

"Is he asleep, Thello?" said Mary.

"Ah, ma'am, Mary Dance, you berry fond of him, eh?"

There was no answer.

"No wonder at um. He fine young man for white man, and some lady prefer de pale skin. But you say am him sleep or no? Well, ma'am, I no say he do such ting; but if him not got de grog bottle in um pocket, and drink till him so drunk he no know nuffin, I say he gone out ob him mind for fear ob de snake."

"Oh, don't say so," groaned poor Mary.

"But um hab say so," exclaimed Thello; "and dis colour person seem to tink it no matter now what happen, and what don't happen; for, if we

don't get burn to deff—cooked like um chicken in de galley—then we starve to deff, 'less we eat de women all up, one at time. Oh, it's bery drefle, ma'am; bery drefle, indeed."

"Awful!" groaned Mary.

"Yes, ma'am, drefle awful. I no know what I do bess, for poor lilly woman leff all in charge of 'Thello now. Mass' Helston dead, and Mass' Laurent mad as hatter. Well, it might been much worse: dis person might hab suffer too, and then what come of you all?"

Mary made no reply; and so the night wore on, and their position became each moment more painful. The heat was intense, and with it came the consequent parching thirst, which they had no means of assuaging.

At times, wafts of hot air, laden with fine cinders, made their position more intolerable; but these passed over, or the difficulty of respiration must have resulted in death for some. The zone of fire which surrounded them, and looked golden in the darkness, began to pale in the light of the coming day into a dull red, and, as day fully broke, the pale red was further softened by the grey ash that lay upon the surface.

The party on the hill, too, became aware of the awful desolation that surrounded them, and, on a tour of inspection being made as near to the molten lava as they could bear to go, they found that there was no escape for them at present; for a stone thrown upon the lava in different places always had the same result—that of sinking quickly out of sight in the fierce liquid mass that turned the hill into an island.

Mary Dance sat watching with 'Thello beside Laurent, who still lay in a stupor, when, thoroughly satisfied that there were no means of present escape, the women who were suffering painfully from hunger and thirst came and surrounded them.

For in their need it seemed natural to them to fly to the cook as the person to give them help.

"What you hab to eat!" exclaimed 'Thello, starting up angrily on being appealed to. "How de debble I know what you hab to eat? You bring um to me and I cook um, but I not speck to give de wittles and cook um too."

"But what can we bring, 'Thello?" said one woman, piteously.

"How I know?" cried 'Thello. "I no think why de debble dat snake go and burn himself all up, when, if he only half cook, he capple eating."

One woman shuddered, but the others had only a hungry look in their eyes; and if the huge serpent had been before them, well dressed, it is doubtful whether some of them would not have tried the reptile.

"But, 'Thello, what shall we do?" cried one.

"Yes, dear, good 'Thello, pray say what we are to do? We will try and bear the heat, only we shall starve," cried another.

"I been drefle wicked ole man," muttered 'Thello, "but I try be better now. It very drefle, though, when de lubby little woman come and make lub to colour genlum like dis, and call him dear, good 'Thello. Dah! what de debble shall I do?" he cried aloud.

"Get us something to eat," cried a dozen.

"Ah, berry easy say dat," cried 'Thello; "but how I do it? Dere, wait lilly while," he continued, grinning; for now that the immediate danger seemed past 'Thello's spirits rose. "Dere plenty fire round, and Mass' Laurent soon die, and I cook him."

A cry of horror rose from the little crowd.

"Oh!" cried 'Thello, "you no like Mass' Laurent? Well, den, pick out nice tender little gal, and me have her 'stead."

As the black showed his teeth and rolled his eyes, some of the women evidently considered that he was in earnest, and shrank away shuddering; several fleeing right to the other side of their fire-girded island, when the black rose up, and, walking to where the hatchet lay, picked it up, and looked about him.

"He's going to kill one of us," shrieked one girl, hysterically.

And her dread grew more intense as she saw the black sit down and carefully scour the hatchet head free of blood-stains with the volcanic dust.

"Now," said 'Thello, when he had finished his task to his satisfaction, "what I find? I wonder wedder I able dig up any roots good to eat."

He went off prowling amongst the scorched bushes and dead wood, but for a time his search was vain; till, beneath the remains of a tree, and covered with volcanic dust, he stumbled upon something soft.

"What's dat?" he said to himself. "Oh, lor', what find! Now, what shall dis colour genlum do? Keep him all for self and lib on it long time, or share um wid de women? I tink this colour genlum too great man to do dirty action. Here! hi! you lilly gal, come here."

A dozen women ran to his side, and he pointed in triumph to the scorched and blackened body of a wild pig that had crawled away from the burning flood, and then died, suffocated by the dust in which it was buried.

"What is it?" cried the women.

"Dere will be roace pork for dinner to-day, ladies; lilly bit apiece, and nothing else, if de fire don't come down again 'fore de night."

'Thello's find proved the saving of their lives; and fortunately it was a goodly sized animal. He set to at once, had it carried into a place he cleared, and after preparation and cutting up, he soon had it hissing and spluttering in half a dozen joints, in so many extemporized fireplaces in front of the lava.

And the day rolled on slowly, with the fire beginning to glow more brightly as the sun went down; while Laurent still lay in the state of stupor into which he had fallen, with Mary Dance never leaving his side.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—MARY DANCE'S PLAN.

MANY a feverish, tossing head was raised that night to look towards the volcano, dimly seen over the glowing lava; but it stood up now, calm and solemn, while a cool, pleasant breeze swept over the island, wafting away the heated vapours that arose.

Fortunately for the imprisoned women, the breeze came from their side, thus only passing over a few yards of molten lava: had it come from the other

side of the island, that which was refreshing and strength-renewing, might have meant suffocation, and even death.

Mary Dance kept a long, weary vigil; and as she gazed around from time to time she saw that the island shone up with its dull, red glow from nearly every part.

Laurent lay perfectly passive, evidently sleeping; so that the trouble she had that night came from her own heart, as she sat with her chin upon her hands, thinking of the wreck by her side, and of the too certain deaths of Grace Monroe, Helston, and Deborah.

"What next and next?" she wondered to herself, as she sat sleepless, and yet weary; and then in her mind she began to make projects for the future.

How long would the lava take in cooling sufficiently to form a crust hard enough for them to pass over, so as to escape from the horrible position in which they were placed? It was a question she could not answer; but one which in its solution meant life to them or death.

With the coming day hope revived in all. The island was desolated, it was true; but they had heard how rapid vegetation was in these latitudes, and the desolate waste of ashes would probably soon glow again with verdant life when the volcanic heat died away.

Laurent was one of the first awake, and he rose, looking from one to the other in a vacant way; while, when Mary Dance spoke to him, he turned impatiently away, and began to press his hand to his injured shoulder.

This was evidently very stiff, and he moved about with difficulty, as if his side had been crushed; but he spoke to nobody, only muttered to himself, and, to Mary's intense misery, she saw that not only did he not recognize her, but his mind was quite gone.

He had apparently only one thought upon his brain, and that was the serpent, in search of which he now painfully limped off, closely followed by Mary, as he bent down, closely examining the ground on all sides, but keeping at a reasonable distance from the lava.

Mary spoke to him again and again, but he paid not the slightest heed—only went on muttering and searching—and even when he came upon 'Thello—whose search had been rewarded with another dead pig, and that worthy was capering with delight—he did not listen to his call, but went hastily on.

"Well, after dat," cried 'Thello, "I tink Mass' Laurent mad as March hare. No man in um senses go by piece roace pork like dis here when um mose starve to deff."

Mary followed Laurent till she saw that her efforts were vain, when she contented herself with sitting down to watch him, religiously keeping him in sight as she called some of the women together and unfolded her plans.

The sun shone out now bright and clear, sky and sea were of a brilliant blue, and it was only on the island side that the dense cloud and heat went up, being completely wafted away.

As the women collected round her, Mary shuddered at the gaunt, blackened, scorched creatures

she saw; the garments of some were falling from them in tinder, others had their hair scorched and singed, while again others were burnt and in pain. The heat and moisture, with its following perspiration had been at a time when the clouds of ashy dust were falling, and every one was blackened and besmeared to such an extent as hardly to be recognizable.

Mary shuddered as she gazed in face after face, when she was brought to a sense of her own condition by one of the women exclaiming—

"Is that you, Mary Dance? I should not have known you."

"Why?" exclaimed Mary, hastily.

"Your face is all blackened with that burn on your cheek," said the other; "and your hair is burnt off so short on this side. You are changed."

Poor Mary, her mental pain had kept her in ignorance of the bodily suffering; and, as she realised her state, she involuntarily glanced in the direction of Laurent, who was still wandering about; and covering her face with her hands, the scalding tears began to escape between her fingers.

"Don't cry, dear," said one, in sympathetic tones.

"Oh, no, don't cry," said another, bitterly; "we are all pretty well blackened, and it will add to Mr. 'Thello's admiration, as being nearer what is perfection."

This remark sent the hot blood flushing into Mary's face.

"For shame!" she exclaimed. "How can you speak like that? Let us be women even if we have but an hour to live."

The woman uttered a ribald laugh, but the others were so quiet that she was shamed into silence, and Mary rose.

"We must try at once to get out of this place," she said.

"But how?" chorused twenty voices.

"There is but one way," said Mary. "Hands must play the part of spades, aprons of baskets; and we must carry earth till we have thrown enough upon the burning lava to allow us to pass over."

A murmur of satisfaction ran through the little crowd, and, under Mary's guidance, they formed themselves into two parties—those who collected earth and stones into heaps with the loose volcanic ash, and those who carried it to the narrowest part on the side nearest the sea, where an earthen bridge of some sixty feet in length would carry them across to the shore.

They had been for long enough past congregated on the hillside, and were taken by surprise when, on going down with their loads, they found Helston and Grace Monroe standing on the other side of the full glowing river, over whose surface, now it had ceased to flow, the grey crust was beginning to harden.

"You there, Grace, and alive!" cried Mary, joyfully; and she threw herself on her knees with a fervent "thank God."

"Are you all alive and well?" was Helston's question.

"Yes, all alive—not well," replied Mary, in a choking voice. Then hastily, "Where is Deborah?"

There was no reply.

"Not dead?" exclaimed Mary, in an awestricken voice.

"I hope not," said Helston. "We left her sleeping the night before last, and should have watched her; but we were overcome with weariness and slept. In the morning she was gone."

"Gone? Where?" cried Mary.

"I cannot say," replied Helston. "We have sought for her ever since all along the shore and inland, wherever the lava has left the place unburned."

"Then there are parts not burned," cried twenty voices, eagerly.

"Oh, yes," was the reply, "though every inch of soil is more or less devastated."

"Then we may live if we escape from here across this red-hot rock."

"I hope so," said Helston, earnestly.

"But, Deborah," cried Mary, "you do not think she—the sea—the fire?"

"I hope not," said Helston, sadly; "but, poor woman, she was delirious, and I know not what to say."

"But, Mr. Laurent—where is Mr. Laurent?" cried Grace, speaking for almost the first time.

"Mass' Laurent got hisself in to trubble wid a big serpum, Ma'am Grace Monroe," cried 'Thello, who had been attracted with the other women from tearing up the earth by the shouting. "He lilly bit touch in him knowledge box juss at present, ma'am; but he soon get better when we out ob dis galley fire oven sort of place."

Helston saw Mary Dance turn aside and hang down her head.

"Poor fellow!" he muttered. Then, seeing the exigencies of the case, he exclaimed—"Then you are going to try and throw earth on till the lava bears you?"

"Yes, sah, dat's him," cried 'Thello; "den we gib you bit ob roace pork."

"Ah, about provisions," cried Helston; "have you anything?"

"Find um wild pig beautiful roasted, sah," cried 'Thello; "but we all dry up like cracklum ourselbs for want ob lilly drop ob water."

"I cannot give you water," cried Helston; "but we have collected a heap of fruit for you."

He pointed to a pile of wild apple-like fruit, and the plums of the island. These he immediately set to work throwing across for them, to be collected, placed together, and then fairly distributed, and eaten with avidity, every morsel of juicy pulp being like nectar to the parched lips and throats of the suffering women.

Every word spoken had had to be shouted across the space between them—'Thello, who was in the highest of spirits since the discovery of the pigs, jocularly declaring to one of the women that lots of the remarks came over quite hot.

Then the work began with a will from both sides—the women on the fire-surrounded hill tearing up and bringing down ashes, earth, and stones which was duly thrown on the lava within certain narrow bounds; and Helston and Grace toiling as busily on the other side to begin a causeway to meet them; they, on their side, collecting sand and stones—Grace bringing the sand, and Helston stones, old

clusters of shells, and masses of rock such as he could hardly stagger under.

As the day progressed, 'Thello—who had toiled like a giant, his duty being that of standing nearest the scorching lava, receiving the material, and throwing it on—suddenly paused to wipe the perspiration from his face, exclaiming—

"Dis berry pleasant sort ob work. More I frow on, de more room I seem to make for more!"

But this was not really the case; for, though vast quantities of earth had been swallowed up, he had made a few feet of solid way; and, what was more, a sufficiency of earth had been thrown about for some distance over the glowing surface to deaden the heat, though, wherever any vegetable refuse touched the lava, it immediately withered up and burst into flame.

Helston's work seemed to progress very little; for, as he threw on stone after stone, it—like the heaps of earth on the other side—broke through the thin crust formed by the slowly cooling lava, and sank slowly out of sight.

"But we must be making progress," he said, as he bent over and kissed the little hands so busily gathering up sand into a kerchief. "It will be days of work, perhaps, before we have much show; but every handfull helps to make a solid foundation."

Towards evening, by mutual consent, it was decided that Helston and Grace should cease their part of the toil to fetch fruit, which, fortunately, they were able to find in abundance; and they worked hard till dark, collecting and bearing this to the edge of the lava, and throwing it across.

Helston saw Laurent twice; but, after being hailed by his friend, he kept at a distance, moodily hunting about till the night closed in on the weary labours of the party.

The great mellow stars were burning in the dark purple arch of heaven, as, after a simple meal of the shell fish, Helston and Grace sat hand in hand upon the sandy shore, inhaling the pure sea breeze and thinking of the future.

All was still even to solemnity, and the glow from the lava behind them was very faint as compared to that of the night before. The buzzing murmur of voices that had come from the hill after the last good nights had been said had long ceased, when, suddenly from out of the darkness, and very close at hand, there rose up a fearful shriek, which made them both start to their feet, Grace clinging to Helston for protection from what seemed like some new horror.

Among the Icebergs.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"I DON'T care, I'll take half a davy I see this here lump with a top like a mushroom; and if we bear off a little to the left now, we shall make the ship in less than an hour."

"I believe you're right, Solly, I do, indeed, now. But what do you say to burying the meat, and coming for it in the morning?"

"No, we've got it, and we'll stick to it. I wonder whether Ellerby's had any luck. Hallo!"

I heard all those words as plainly as if I had been in full possession of my senses; but though I knew them to be those of Captain Pash and Mr. Solly, I could not tell then that they were just returning laden from their shooting expedition, and had missed their way in the darkness—I could not tell then that I had been mercifully guided in the only direction that could give me help; but though the name of Ellerby had sent a pang through my breast, a horrible pang of fear when I heard it spoken, it was then my salvation, for it had made me start slightly, and the quick eye of the mate had caught sight of the motion.

I heard their next words, too; but, like poor Brunyee, it seemed as if speech were frozen, and, though they spoke to me again and again, it was to elicit no reply.

I learned all afterwards, how they had poured the last few drops of their spirits between my lips, cached the reindeer flesh they were bearing, and carried me amongst them in a large skin rug back to the vessel, where for days my life was despaired of; but there were two tender women there to lavish upon me all that love could give, and by degrees I recovered.

It was many days after, though, that I was seated in the cabin, with our little party augmented by the presence of Mark Grant, an invalid, like myself; and Captain Pash little knew the pain he caused me as he pointed sometimes to the suffering figure leaning back with half closed eyes, apparently hopeless, and failing fast. I could interpret the captain's nods and shakes of the head plainly enough, and till now I had not even had the power to give the consolation that might, I knew, perhaps bring him back to life.

I wanted Captain Grant to know how true and faithful I had been—how I had fought against difficulties, and how my heart had bled for the cruel way in which I had treated his honest love; but how could I, how dared I tell him?

I had thought this a dozen times as I slowly recovered, and now, on this evening, I told myself that the old coquetry was springing up once more, and, even at the risk of being unmaidenly, I would pluck it out and give him peace.

The opportunity was not long in coming, for on this night Captain Pash spoke, and I saw a tremor pass through Mark Grant's frame as he heard his words.

"I haven't let anybody speak about it till you got better, Miss Jessie; and I wouldn't let anybody ask you, not even Ann Brent, waiting like till you could speak yourself. But as you hadn't spoke, and as you're getting strong once more, I must ask you myself. You see, for days and days you had no tongue at all, and we could do nothing but search. Now, perhaps, you can put us in a better way, for we want to know what's become of Mr. Ellerby."

It was now that I saw the tremor pass through Mark Grant, and he turned his head more away from the light.

"I will try and tell you anything you wish, Captain Pash," I said, fighting down the emotion that oppressed me—for, like a flood of trouble, all the horrors of that night came back. But I conquered,

and told how I had fled from Stephen Ellerby farther and farther in the wild region where I thought to meet my death, and how I recalled no more till I heard the words of the returning party.

"And the weak one was saved, and the strong was lost," said Captain Pash, solemnly. "There was a storm came on that night, Miss Jessie, and a fearful fall of snow, and it was a hard fight for us to reach the ship, and we shouldn't have made it but for old Brunyee, who came out firing guns, and helped us in. He told what he knew about leaving you with Mr. Ellerby, but it was more than our lives were worth to go out again. We searched, though, the next morning, and we searched the next day, and so on every day; but we knew it was soon all of no use. But now we should like to find him, and give his bones a Christian burying."

Dead, lost in the snow of that awful night, never found, gone for ever! Those were the thoughts that kept rushing through my brain as I sat there, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, for how long I know not; for the recollections and the shock had been too much for me in my then weak state. But the reaction came days after, and I was seated once more in the cabin by the glowing fire, and there was some one there beside, some one whom I could not see for the blinding tears, save that he was now erect, and that he was no longer the suffering invalid upon whom I had gazed before.

Words? What words could there be when, even in that wild, cold region, hearts were beating tumultuously. But there were words, too, as once more in his life Mark Grant held out to me those appealing hands—those hands I had seen held out to me at Hull when I had been cold and cruel—in my wild vision of the night—and now—now when, weak and helpless though I was, I tottered to my feet to hold out mine as I had ever longed to stretch them forth.

"Did I love him? Could I love him?"

Ay! as I had ever loved—with the love that had drawn me to him all these many miles; and so I told him as I lay weeping upon his faithful breast.

CHAPTER XXV.

WAS it real, or was it that the joy of our hearts could turn that awful region of ice and snow, of howling wind, and crashing berg, into a scene of brightness, and hope, and love?

True, there was the sun rising higher and higher day by day to reach that eminence which should give one long, nightless day. The ice was melting fast, and water appearing here and there; flocks of birds were constantly passing overhead, and with light, abundant food, and busy preparation, the fearful sickness which had weakened the crew of the *Dawn* soon passed away. The days that had been long and dreary were bright and gay, and with the advancing summer came the certainty that both the vessels would soon be at liberty.

And it was so—Nature unlocked her icy chains, and in the midst of the glorious sunshine both vessels set sail southward, with the crews cheering as they bade farewell to the place of their long captivity.

There was sadness in my heart, though, as I saw

fading away in the distance the figure of the captain of the *Northern Dawn*, even as I had once before seen it pass from my sight in the Humber; but I was brought back to myself by the voice of old Brunyee, who exclaimed—

"Cheer up, my pretty. Ships can't always keep close company; but see if we don't sail into Hull port within twenty-four hours of one another; and that's what I've been telling that great lass Ann, who's snivelling away there in the bows. There, God bless you!—don't be down now; with a fair wind, and a flowing sheet, and, as the song says, 'the heart that loves a sailor!'"

Old Brunyee was a true prophet, for on the same day, after a prosperous voyage, I was sobbing in dear old Mr. Moore's arms, at the same time that he had hold of Mark Grant's hand, shaking it as his voice quivered, and he spoke in broken words of the past, till, by an effort, he drove away his weakness, and tried to laugh it off.

"It was all nonsense about that dream, you know," he said; "for, of course, if a pretty girl loved a smart young fellow, he would always be running in her head."

Then he turned very solemn, and I heard him speaking to Captain Pash, with a feeling of deep sadness creeping over me, for I knew that it seemed as if I were to blame. I knew only too well what they spoke of, though it was but in whispers, for I heard Captain Pash's last words—

"No, sir, not even when the ice broke up—we never saw him again."

And this is the story that I have told my son—as it has been told by Ann Berry to her children—once—twice—I dare not say how often; when he has pressed for it again and again—when he was young, and the pride of his prosperous grandfather and mother; and when he was growing towards man's estate, and following the career of his father upon the great deep. I have told it to him, too, in the bitter nights of winter, when the fierce snow-storm has howled round the house, and ice-laden with the large blocks, has gone floating down the Humber. I have told it in tears, with a feeling of strange emotion swelling my breast, as I have shuddered over the recollection of *his* fate. And I have told it with joy; for even though now the wrinkles are thick, and grey hairs glisten, and tell of the winter of coming age, there is a thrill of pleasure in the recital, for it tells me of how I won from the icy land him who calls me his true wife.

"Tell us, mother—tell us again—the Search for the *Dawn*."

"*Dawn*, Mark?" says his father, with a glance at me. "Ay! boy—the dawn of a life of sunshine."

THE END.

A FRIEND was informing John Hollingshead that a German band had invaded the legal precincts of Lincoln Inn's Fields, and suggested that it must cause considerable annoyance to the solicitors. "Not a bit," said Hollingshead, "so long as they play in 6s.-8d. time."

The Ecotist's Note-book.

A FEW days ago there was a larger attendance than usual at the Crystal Palace to witness the distribution of the prizes and medals in connection with the recent competitions among the readers of the *Little Folks' Magazine* for all kinds of fancy work, scrap albums, collections of dried flowers, ferns, seaweed, &c. These prizes were given by the proprietors of the magazine, and several of the little prize-winners were present and received their awards, amid much cheering, from the hands of Lady Lush. All the articles contributed were offered for sale during the day, and the proceeds were devoted to the funds of the Orphan Working School, Haverstock-hill, one of the oldest institutions of the kind in the kingdom. During the continuance of the bazaar, some four hundred of the orphanage children sang a selection of music.

A popular music publisher is advertising songs and their replies. Now, the songs are very nice, but I quarrel with the replies, and wonder whether they really do answer. For instance, "What to us is silver hair?" is advertised as the answer to "Silver threads." "Golden cottons" would be far better. "Birdies come" is the reply to "Come, birdie, come." "Have you got the salt?" is a far superior reply. "Only a body at the door" would do for reply to "Only a face at the window"; while for pithiness, "Dried up" would be the very thing to follow "Tis but a little faded flower."

It is bad enough to be poor; but much worse to be poor and suffer from the small-pox, when one's neighbours rise up against us and treat us as pariahs. Small-pox hospitals must be put somewhere; but every one says, "Not near us!" In fact, at Limehouse, 600 hands at a factory have struck work because a hospital has been opened close by them. Has it ever occurred to the strikers that those most exposed to contagion suffer the least? How about the doctors?

A friend once asked Offenbach if he had ever put his shoes up the chimney.

"Yes, once," replied the composer.

"And what did you get?"

"The gout."

Now that winter has come, and ladies are looking forward to many a pleasant evening spent in the enjoyment of the dance, they often forget the attendant fatigue, until the exhaustion of the following day reminds them that every pleasure has its alloy. This fatigue is in great measure produced by the tight ligature or garter with which the stockings are fastened, hindering the free circulation of the blood. Medical men are unanimous in declaring the use of garters to be a most fruitful source of disease. Every lady desiring health and comfort should at once provide herself with a pair of the new patent stocking suspenders, made by Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London. The price is only 3s. per pair, of any draper, or post free for two extra stamps.

Si Slocum; or, the American Trapper and his Dog.

CHAPTER III.—A BRACE OF BEAUTIES.

THE yellow-faced, Spanish-looking gentleman, owner of no less a sounding name than Julian Ramon Vasquez, a grand enough title for a Castilian don, whereas its bearer was only a kind of general manager for Mr. Fuller Townsend, walked, as we have seen, into the gambling saloon in happy ignorance of the fact that Jerry Blackburn's fulminations of wrath had been hurled at his head, and that his rough behaviour had made him an enemy the more.

He had not been inside more than ten minutes before a curious-looking individual came into sight—a smooth-faced, short-haired, tightly-clothed fellow, whose motions put you in mind of those of a fat rat. For he came along cautiously a little bit at a time, really not only stealing his way, but seeming to steal every mouthful of fresh air he inhaled.

He was rat-like in his bright, black, beady eyes and round, prominent ears; rat-like in his soft way of getting over the ground, and looking in all directions for traps, cats, terriers, and poison paste; rat-like in his sleek, furry-looking smoothness, and, to make himself perfect in the simile, he inadvertently wore a grey, closely-fitting fur cap.

He was the kind of man that your nearest and dearest friend might introduce to you if you wanted a man, and vouch for his honesty with the strongest asseverations; but you would never believe him, and in your own mind say to yourself—"What a splendid fellow to do a piece of dirty work!"

Nature had had much to do with moulding Jake Bledsoe's face, so that it said scoundrel at every turn; but Jake himself had given it the finishing touches: abhorring hard work, and loathing honesty in every form, he had loafed, smoked, and drunk himself into a soddened blackguard; but he had been blessed—goodness only knows why!—with so magnificent a constitution that, in spite of years upon years of dissipation, he was light, and even corky in his elastic activity, as shown in the way he made for the gambling saloon.

He was within twenty yards of the gaily-painted, swinging doors, when, being so well on the alert, he saw in the distance a showily-dressed, vulgar looking woman approaching, and turned himself, as on a pivot, in an instant.

"Snags!" he ejaculated. "My wife! That woman's always turning up. Sure as I spin the copper luck in the air and want it to come down man it turns up woman, and that woman's Bet Bledsoe."

He spoke in that husky kind of whisper common amongst dram-drinkers, and, rat-like still, he slipped, metaphorically, into his hole; in other words, he darted into an alley, and waited till the lady—who, in her appearance, was a cross between the sunflower and poppy of the English fields—had passed on, when he reappeared.

"Always turning up," he said, huskily, as he resumed his rat-like course. "I b'lieve if I went to Chiney she'd be there, and so she would if I went to 'Stralia. I left her in Noo Orleans and she turned

up in 'Frisco. I hadn't been a week in Chicago 'fore I see her coming down the street; and now, just as luck's done me a good turn in Noo York, down she comes, and the game's up. Any one would think as the Mormons was all dead, for a fine woman to be goin' about the country without being picked up by any of the missionary elders. Oh, lor', I wish 'em joy."

"Oh, you're there at last," said Vasquez, coming to the door, cigarette in teeth.

"Yes, I'm here," said Jake Bledsoe. "Been here afore; but I ran against the squaw."

"What—your wife?" said Vasquez.

"Right. The wife!" cried Bledsoe, looking over his shoulder. "She's down on me again."

"You'll have to renew the affectionate ties, Jake," said Vasquez, with a sneering laugh. "Take her to your manly bosom again, and be happy."

"Don't—I say, don't," groaned Bledsoe. "You know there's only one thing that skeers me; don't keep flourishing it before my eyes."

"Poor devil!" said Vasquez, with a mocking laugh. "Well, Jake, I don't believe you are a greater coward than the rest of us. I've got a job for you."

"Right," cried Bledsoe, giving a rat's glance for danger in all directions. "I thought you hadn't been coming the respectable here in Noo York for nothing."

"I sha'n't be respectable long if I'm seen talking to Mr. Jake Bledsoe, plug-ugly, known in—"

"As many sore places as Don Julian Ramon Vasquez, eh?" chuckled Bledsoe.

"Good—and smart," said Vasquez, smiling like a cat about to bite.

"Right," said Bledsoe; "then let's go in somewhere. My throat's like so much sand-paper."

"Sounds like it," said Vasquez. "Well, come in here, it's public but it's private; and those who come think only of their game, and won't notice us."

They entered the showily decorated saloon, and took their seats on the velvet couches on either side of a little marble table, the place being fitted something after the fashion of a French café.

Vasquez ordered drinks, and on their being placed before them, the difference in the habits of the two men was shown—Bledsoe pouring his down his throat as into some receptacle, to be carried away, Vasquez half-closing his eyes, and sipping by slow degrees, every drop apparently being devoted to the brightening of a thought.

"Now," said Bledsoe, huskily, "what is it? Are you going to propose free life out in the West again?"

"No," said Vasquez, dreamily exhaling smoke; "I am going to stay here."

"Ah!" groaned Bledsoe, "I want to be off again."

"It answers my purpose to stay, Jake," said Vasquez; "but I have got a little job for you."

"Knife?" whispered the smooth scoundrel, in a husky whisper.

"Oh, no," said Vasquez. "Only a little innocent trick, my friend. This is New York, Jake, not Arizona. No knives and six-shooters here."

"Thought not," said Bledsoe, with a leer. "That's only a snuff-box, then, in your breast pocket. Looked like pills."

Vasquez started, and hastily thrust something lower into his pocket, while his companion laughed in a husky, silent manner, in the exuberance of his delight.

"Bah!" Vasquez exclaimed, impatiently, "one can't carry irons for half one's life without getting used to the habit."

"'Course not," said Bledsoe. "But come, what is it?"

"It's twenty dollars, Jake," answered Vasquez, calmly.

"That's got a good sound," said the fellow. "And for the twenty dollars?"

"Look here, Jake. You know I'm a respectable member of society now; and though you found me out by accident here in New York, I'm not the man to turn my back on an old friend—one who has done some pleasant little things with me in his time. With some men I should have cut up rough, because they would have begun to trade on me, to draw hush-money, and that sort of thing. With chaps like that my plan would have been to quietly wait for them some night, and put a bullet through their skulls."

Bledsoe moved a little uneasily in his seat.

"But, Jake, old pard, you always were a straight-forward, honest friend; and when you come upon me, I only say don't be seen talking to me, and don't come near me at the house where I'm manager to Mr. Fuller Townsend, who may make me his partner. It might do me harm, Jake, I say, and you're too good a fellow to do that. At the same time, if I can serve an old friend, and he can serve me, why, of course we do it."

"That's about it," said Bledsoe, huskily. "But, Vas, my throat's getting like sand-paper again."

Vasquez took the hint, and the drink was ordered, brought, and poured down Bledsoe's throat to join the first.

"Now," said Vasquez, leaning across the marble table, and speaking in an impressive whisper—"there's a man up at the place here who's in my way. Curse him! I hate him."

"Right, captain," said Bledsoe, making believe to turn up his cuff.

"This is New York, I tell you," said Vasquez, impatiently. "Now, this is a canting scoundrel—a good, honest fellow, who wouldn't do a mean action—so he says—and he crosses my path. Jake, he must go."

"Well, but snags! How?"

"The plan isn't quite ripe yet, Jake; but will be to-morrow. Suppose, Jake, that this man had access to the warehouse. He has no business there; but suppose he goes there, forces open cases of English goods just landed, and takes a bit of lace from this and a roll of silk from that, and that these goods are afterwards missed and his house is searched. It would be very curious if it turned out as the fellow's wife was fond of finery."

"Cuss 'em, they all are," said Bledsoe, with a groan.

"Well," continued Vasquez, "suppose, then, I say, that a roll of silk, partly cut, was found in a chest of drawers, and a box of French kid gloves at the back of a cupboard, and some lace in a packet

stuffed at the bottom of a chest. It would be very curious, wouldn't it—you understand?"

"Very curious," said Bledsoe; "and a deal more curiouser, you bet, if all them things got thar for twenty dollars."

"Pish!" exclaimed Vasquez, "I've mentioned an extra."

"Yes, the French kids," said Bledsoe, "and that means another ten dollars."

"Of course it does," said Vasquez, smiling. "I reckoned badly—thirty dollars, of course."

"Ah," said Bledsoe, "it's a risky thing of a man to take things like that. It's not the first case of the sort as I've heard on. What's the name of this honest cuss?"

"Si Slocum," said Vasquez, showing his teeth. "He lives at Townsend's bit of a farm place, and has charge of the horses that go to and from the harbour."

"I shall find out," said Bledsoe, grinning, "for I should like to see where the honest cuss lives. One takes an interest in him, you know. Oh, I say, though, squire," he continued, with a wider grin, "you've got to send me a parcel, haven't yew?"

Vasquez nodded.

"Yes—no, I shall bring it. Jake, I shall be here to-morrow night, at eight o'clock, sitting in this very seat."

"So shall I," said Bledsoe, grinning, as they rose and parted, when he added—

"Unless I meet Mrs. Bledsoe; and if I do, I don't know where I shall be."

CHAPTER IV.—PLEASANT FOR THE LOVERS.

SI SLOCUM leaped from his seat with a troubled aspect, and stared for a moment at Jerry, who stood nodding his head again.

"Iss, sah; berry tickler indeed, he say."

"What does he want?" muttered Si, the troubled aspect of his face increasing.

"Is anything wrong, Silas?" exclaimed his wife.

"No, no," he exclaimed—"nothing. But you go away. There, keep out of sight. There—no—that is, I mean I must see this gentleman from the counting-house alone."

"I'll go and leave you, Si," said his wife, laying her hand upon his arm; "but you're keeping something from me, and I don't think I deserved it, Si—I don't, indeed."

"No, she don't, I reckon," said Si, looking after her with a troubled air as she left the room; "and I won't keep it from her any longer. For, if a wife aint worthy a man's confidence, she aint no wife at all. Here, Jerry, ask Mr. Vasquez to come in."

"Iss, massa," exclaimed Jerry. And he returned at the end of a minute, asking in Vasquez, and looking him all over the while as if searching for something he had lost. "Dis way, sah; Massa Si Slocum in um dining-room. Yah, you yaller face, ugly, nigger-shubbing t'ief," he said, beneath his breath, as he backed out, leaving the two men face to face; "I like to take you by you ugly 'cruft, an' make you see 'tars—shubbing speckable color pussons orf de sidewaik."

As Si Slocum and Vasquez stood face to face, each with what was intended for a pleasant smile

upon his lip, they gazed in each other's eyes, and, as if by instinct, the mutual feeling was that they were mortal enemies.

Si was the first to break the awkward silence.

"Will you take a chair, Mr. Vasquez? I am sorry my house is so untidy. We have just had dinner, and my dining-room is parlour, kitchen, and hall."

"Only too glad to be beneath the roof of such an honest man, Slocum. Your house is charming and does you credit. But your other charming piece of property—your wife—where is she?"

"Have you come upon business, Mr. Vasquez?" said Si, bluntly.

"Business—oh, of course. Glad she is well. And the son and heir of the family of Slocum?"

"Mr. Vasquez, I'm a man of very few words," said Si; "if you've come on business, here I am. What do you want?"

"Charmingly frank, Mr. Slocum," said Vasquez; "only this. Some goods have just reached the warehouse from the ship *Rocket*, of Liverpool. Mr. Townsend knows that it is not in your regular duty, but one man is away ill, and he would be obliged if you would come and see to the stowing of them at once."

"I'm always at Mr. Townsend's orders, sir, for I'm in his pay," said Si, slowly; "and if you'll lead on I'll follow."

"Directly, Mr. Slocum," sneered Vasquez.

"I'm coming with you, I reckon," said Si.

And holding the door open ceremoniously he followed his visitor out, feeling troubled and annoyed, he knew not why, unless it was that he connected in some way this visit with the story of his life he had been relating to his wife.

They had hardly passed out of the gate when Jerry's head was thrust forth, and the black sent a volley of negro epithets after the man who had offended his dignity, while Ruth Slocum re-entered her room.

"There's more on Si's mind than I know of," she said to herself.

And she sighed as she hastily tidied up the house, after making sure that the boy Freddie was all right, he being intently watching Jerry, who, to the neglect of his rightful work, was busy carving a canoe.

She had hardly finished her task, sighing again and again as she thought of the pitiful fate of her husband's parents, when Patsey, a wiry-looking, spry Yankee girl—the family "help"—came in, wiping the soapsuds off her hands, and announced to her mistress that—

"She kinder reckoned she bean 'out done for one day, and that she was new agoin' to make herself smart, and take Freddie for a walk."

Patsey's disappearance was followed by the arrival of a fresh visitor in the shape of the red and yellow lady, Mrs. Bledsoe.

"You've come for the work, Mrs. Bledsoe?" said Ruth.

"Yes, ma'am, I have," said the new-comer; "for I'm reduced to taking in plain needlework, consequent upon the desertion of a worthless husband, being the daughter of aristocratic English parents, and in comparative poverty."

"That's very hard," said Mrs. Slocum, sympa-

thetically. "A woman is to be pitied who has a bad husband."

"If he'd only been bad, ma'am, I wouldn't have cared, and would have forgiven him; but he's worse and worse, and I'd far better have been a widow."

Ruth saw danger in the shape of a tremendously long narrative, and being a businesslike woman, she cut it short by declaring how sorry she was that the things were not ready.

"Can you call to-morrow?" she said.

This, Mrs. Bledsoe said, was impossible; but the matter was settled by her promising to call on the next day but one, and taking her leave.

"There, I thought as much," cried Ruth, joyfully. "Here's Miss Townsend."

And she ran to the door, to greet a bright, lady-like girl, who hurried in, breathless and flushed, but only to turn pale directly after, sink down in her chair, and ask for a glass of water.

"Why, what is it, my dear?" exclaimed Mrs. Slocum, sympathizingly. "You're not ill?"

"No, no—oh, no," said the girl, recovering herself; "but I met Mr. Vasquez a little while ago, and he looked at me as if he knew where I was coming; and what with that, and the knowledge that I am doing wrong, I felt so upset that I should never have got here but for the dread I had that he was following me."

"This Mr. Vasquez seems a pleasant man, my dear," said Ruth.

"Oh, Ruth, I detest him; he's unbearable!"

"And are you afraid he'd watch and tell your papa you come here?"

"Oh, no—yes. I never told you, Ruth, that it is he whom papa wishes me to marry."

"Why, my dear, he's old enough to be your father, isn't he?"

"Yes; but it isn't only that—" began Kate.

"No," said Ruth, holding up one finger, "it isn't only that. I know what it is."

"Don't, pray," cried Kate, trembling. "Oh, if papa were to find out! I do feel as if I were being so wicked."

"And so do I, my dear; and I don't know what's to become of us all when it's found out. Si will never forgive me."

"I musn't come any more," exclaimed the girl, agitatedly.

"And what will Mr. Wallace Foster say?" said Ruth, smiling. "There, my dear, I can't see that it's so very wrong for you to prefer a fine, handsome, good-hearted young fellow, if he is poor, to such a man as I hear this Mr. Vasquez is; and, besides, if your papa loves you, as he must, you know, in his heart, he is sure to forgive you sooner or later."

"Do you think he will?" cried Kate, earnestly.

"Why, my dear, the man who wouldn't forgive you anything couldn't be a man at all," cried Ruth, kissing the piteous, girlish face turned up to hers; "and, besides—besides—besides," whispered Ruth, turning the girl round, so as to stand behind her, as she saw some one enter the room and advance on tiptoe—"besides, my dear—"

"And besides what, Ruth?" said the girl.

"Besides, there is some one to love and protect

you, come what may," whispered the new-comer, who had taken Ruth's place.

And Kate uttered a cry of joy as she turned round and threw herself into his arms.

"Oh, Wallace!" she cried.

"Why, you've been crying, little one," exclaimed the young man, a frank, sunbrowned fellow of five or six and twenty; "has any one dared—"

"Oh, no, no," cried Kate. "It is nothing; only Wallace, dear Wallace, you must not ask me to come here any more."

"And why?" he said, half bitterly. "Your father has insulted me, called me a beggar and an upstart, for presuming to love his child, and forbidden me his house. What am I to do, Kate? You have made me love you with all my heart; and if time is given me, I'll work and grow rich enough in my profession to satisfy the proudest merchant in New York."

"Yes, yes, Wallace," cried Kate, "I know, and I am proud to know it; but—"

"But what?" said the young man, gazing reproachfully down in her eyes. "Is my little Kate going to throw me over?"

"Oh, Wallace!" cried the girl, "this is cruel! You know I love you," she whispered, after glancing round, to see that Ruth had retired to the yard, where she was caressing Jack, the great dog; "but how can I carry on this secret against my father? Let us wait patiently and hopefully."

"Till I see you forced into a marriage with a man who I feel sure is a scoundrel and a gambler. Kate, if you married that man, I should kill myself!" cried Wallace, passionately.

"But I never would marry him," said the girl, laying her hands trustingly in those of her lover. "Wallace, have I not promised to be your wife?"

"Yes, darling," he said, affectionately; "but I am an engineer, and I know what the constant application of force will do. There is an old saying about constant dropping wearing a stone. It is hard to disobey a father when he insists upon a thing."

"Wallace," said the girl, flushing, "I am only a weak, fragile-looking little thing."

"You are the dearest and most beautiful girl in the world!" he cried, holding her to his breast.

"But I am firmer than you think for," she cried. "I will be obedient and dutiful in all I can, but I never will be forced into marrying a man I hate."

"And you do hate this Vasquez?" whispered the lover, eagerly, and with all a young lover's suspicions.

"Hate him," said the girl, looking at him wonderingly; "I loathe him."

"Bless you," whispered Wallace. "Oh, Kate, you can't tell how happy you have made me. And now listen, darling—I am hard at work—"

"At your profession?" cried the girl, joyfully.

"Profession? No," he said, gloomily; "that's going to the dogs with all my designs, plans, and proposals."

"Wallace!"

"Well, how can I work," he said, "when the whole of my future happiness is in such a state of doubt? No, Kate, I can't work till I know Mr. Don Julian Ramon Vasquez is ousted from your father's good graces. It is wonderful to me how an old-fashioned,

money-loving, energetic merchant can have taken up with this man, whom I believe to be an adventurer and a scoundrel, who resorts to gambling-houses, and keeps the lowest company. I want to find him out, to expose him."

"But papa believes him to be a gentleman, and the soul of honour," cried Kate.

"And I could swear he is a villain," cried Wallace, impetuously.

"Wallace, you frighten me," cried Kate.

"I cannot understand your father's infatuation," continued Wallace; "but I shall find the scoundrel out, I feel sure, and tell him. Kate, dearest, you must not think of stopping these meetings—I cannot live without you."

"Then die, you scoundrel!" cried a harsh voice.

And Mr. Fuller Townsend, one of New York's most prosperous merchants, stalked into the room.

CHAPTER V.—INTRODUCES MICKEY DORAN.

NOW it so happened that Mickey Doran, "a gentleman from ould Oireland," as he called it, who, being in "redooshed" circumstances in his native country, and tired of digging potatoes and grooming the squireen's horse at home for not enough to "ate," had emigrated to the West and taken service with Mr. Townsend, had heard his master asking loudly for "Dear Miss Kathleen," as he called her.

Vasquez was in the room when Mickey announced that she was out.

"How long has she been gone?" said Mr. Townsend, angrily.

"Troth, yer onner, best part of an hour, sur," said Mickey.

"That will do," said his master, abruptly. "Go."

"Yes, sur," said Mickey, and he went.

But one of his shoes came unlaced just as he closed the door, and, stooping down to secure it, his ear was brought in close contact with the keyhole.

Now Mickey, as an Irish gentleman, would never have condescended to play the eavesdropper, but, of course, he could not help hearing what was said in Mr. Townsend's handsome dining-room as the words came buzzing through the keyhole, and that lace took a deal of doing.

"I won't believe it," exclaimed Mr. Townsend, stamping about the room.

"It's true, sir, I tell you. She is at Slocum's now to meet that fellow Foster."

"It's false!" cried Mr. Townsend, angrily. "Slocum is too honest a fellow to allow of such goings on."

"I hope so," said Vasquez, "but there is his wife."

"And my child would never stoop to such clandestine meetings, after her father has expressly forbidden her to think more of the fellow."

"She may have been led away," said Vasquez.

"And you—how dare you charge her with being there?" cried Mr. Townsend.

"I saw her go," said Vasquez.

"Then," roared Mr. Townsend, "you stopped to play the part of spy. Noble, certainly."

"Sir," cried Vasquez, "I love your child: how well you know; and, in the bitterness of my jealous rage, I did follow her. Would not you, as a young man, have done the same?"

"I don't know—perhaps!" cried Mr. Townsend. "But, come, we will go together and see."

"No, sir," said Vasquez, proudly. "In my rage I may have played the spy; but I love Kate Townsend too well to be present at her humiliation. Sir, I will stay. You must go alone."

"You are a noble fellow, Vasquez," cried Mr. Townsend, "and I will go. You must forgive her for her weak girlishness. This will end it all. Stay here, I will go alone; and all shall be well, when I have brought her to her senses."

"Oh, bedad," muttered Mickey, "and they're going to drop upon the poor colleen for being wid her lover at Si Slocum's. Sure, and she prefers young Foster to Mither Paysoup face there. Bedad, I'll go and tell the colleen the masther's coming, as sure as me name's Mickey, and get her off the wigg-ing, if I've a drop of breath left in me body."

And, slipping out the back way, he ran as hard as he could in the direction of Si Slocum's house.

But Mickey Doran was an Irishman; and when was a bold Irishman insensible to the power of love?

Mickey ran till he was breathless, and then, when nearing Si Slocum's, he caught sight of a pretty little boy, and just behind him a pretty little maiden.

Now, Mickey admired little boys to a certain extent, but his admiration for little maidens knew no bounds; and the sight of Patsey Collins, the Slocums' little maid, sent Mickey's heart beating faster than the running.

Worse still, the pretty face so filled his mind on the instant, that he had not room for the recollection of his errand, and that was clean swept away; so that he could only tollow at a respectful distance, feeling that he was getting more and more in love every moment, especially as Patsey thought Mickey a smart-looking specimen of humanity, and did not disdain to send three or four coquettish glances at him, such as finished the mischief she had begun.

Mickey couldn't help it; it was his nature, and he obeyed her dictates, following Patsey till she took huff, and, pretending to be terribly offended, snatched at little Freddie's hand, and turned in the direction of home, after giving Mickey an angry glance.

"Sure, darlin', ye may look cross," he muttered, "for it improves yer looks. Why, I'd like to put a stick in yer purty fist, and stand still while ye bate me. Och, murther, I've lost me heart intirely, and ye've stolen it. Well, it's only fair as I should see where ye take it to, as I may come and ax ye for it some day, or get ye to give me a little bit of yer own in exchange."

He followed her then up one street and down another, till, suddenly wakening to the direction in which she was going, he suddenly exclaimed—

"Murther! Why, that's Si Slocum's boy, and—millia murther! what am I doing?"

He darted off at a mad run, for the recollection of his errand flashed upon his mind, and, passing Patsey, he ran for Si Slocum's house.

"Oh, murther!" he panted, "it was always the gurls as was the ruin of the men. Here did I mane to save the purty young misthress throuble, and I've been led into temptation by the purtiest face I ever see! Oh dear, oh dear!"

He ran on, muttering still, to Patsey's great astonishment, especially when she saw him dive in at her own gate.

"I shall be seeing the masther, and get me notice to quit. Oh, sorra a bad day was ever as bad as this. Here I am at last."

He dashed in at the gate, ran down the yard to the window, popped his head in, and was about to shout—

"Run, miss, run, here's the masther coming!"

In fact, he had it ready rolled out on his lips, when he shrank back, for he found he was too late, Mr. Townsend was there before him; and he was just in time to hear the words at the end of the last chapter—

"Then die, you scoundrel!"

Mickey Doran turned tail and fled, passing the pretty temptation, Patsey, as if he was afraid she would get him into trouble again, and never stopping till he reached the house.

My Four-Footed Foe.

THAT scoundrelly-looking rascal, the wolf, occupies about the same relation to the dog that the lowest and most thorough type of savage does to civilized man.

Every one who has had dealings with wolves, from Little Red Riding Hood down to the farmers of France to-day, know him to be a sneak, a thief, a coward, a murderer, a bully, and a ruffian. If there is any other opprobrious title indicative of all that is bad, it may just as well be applied to the wolf; for, like the scampish boy who was flogged for a fault of which he was innocent, he is sure to deserve it some time or another.

For, after studying his character carefully, one is compelled to be hard upon him, and acknowledge that he is a terrible ruffian.

While the dog is brave, true, and faithful, the wolf is traitorous and cowardly. He will never attack, unless positively famishing, an animal of his own strength. He will seize by the throat and throttle some wretched little terrier; but if brought face to face with a decent-sized hound, his tail goes down between his legs, and, as the Yankees say, he makes tracks, never thinking of making a brave defence.

When pressed by hunger, he will, perhaps, in the farm lands of France or Germany, attack a wretched cow led by a child; but he gives the bull a wide berth, and only shows a man the point of his tail, and that at a long distance. There are times when, maddened by pain and at bay, he will fight; but these times are few and far between.

I fancy I hear some one saying—

"But there are no wolves now in civilized Europe."

Make no mistake, good reader; they are, unfortunately, only too plentiful, as the farmers know to their cost. Cunning and cowardice combined have enabled them to avoid those who would destroy them, and they find a home still in the larger forests.

This four-footed atrocity has the bad qualities shown by the fox, and sometimes by the cat—that is

to say, he kills not merely to supply himself with food, but for the sake of killing. If he succeeds in eluding the vigilance of the dogs, and gets into a sheepfold some night, he is not contented with killing a sheep, and enjoying a good supper, but sets to and worries ten, fifteen, or twenty woolly unfortunates; and it is not until cock-crow that he sneaks off, carrying with him a single lamb.

The French peasants tell some strange stories about their enemy, one and all giving him the credit of being, like old Joey Bagstock in "Dombey and Son," artful and "devilish sly."

"He has the spirit of evil in him, sir," said one old greybeard to me. "His cunning is not of nature. He is a demon."

"Indeed," I said. "Why?"

"Ah, monsieur, I have seen him do strange things. One night—let me think, it was some thirty winters since—I had been out wolwing, without success, and returned to find the wolf had attacked quite another fold. I met him as I went home, coming away from a neighbour's fold with a sheep, and leading the poor beast away."

"Leading it away?"

"Yes, monsieur, for he was too lazy to carry so much mutton."

"But would the sheep go?"

"It was obliged to go, monsieur; for the wolf had taken him by the long wool of his neck, and when-ever the poor sheep stopped to bleat, the wolf whipped him savagely with his tail, and drove him on."

"Why didn't you kill the beast?" I said.

"Kill it, monsieur? I had nothing with me but a pitchfork, and the wolf turned his savage eyes upon me in such a way that I was glad to give him the road."

There is, however, no question but that the wolves cause serious losses to the farmers; and whenever they obtain an opportunity, these latter do not fail to take revenge.

I was staying with a friend near Melun, one November, about a dozen years ago, when his keeper came in to announce that a wolf had been seen to enter a neighbouring wood, and had not gone out.

We did not place much faith in the assertion, for the keeper had cried "wolf" three or four times before; not that he had laughed at us when there proved to be no wolf, for his face had assumed a very serious expression.

However, as a farmer who was with the keeper begged very earnestly that we would go, we took our guns, and followed him.

That farmer was almost mad with rage against the wolf; for the previous night a party, consisting of papa, mamma, and three well-grown youngsters, had got into his sheepfold, and worried seventeen sheep, some of which were found still breathing in the morning; but they had all been killed, for the French people believe that wounds inflicted by wolves are sure to prove fatal.

Being then so exasperated against the late visitors, the farmers had collected for the hunt the whole of the tag-rag and bobtail of the neighbourhood, and these were armed with every variety of weapon,

from pitchforks to scythes, and from flints to the coulter out of the plough.

In addition, there was an advance guard of about a dozen dogs, forming a pack made up of curs of pretty well every known race and size.

To this, with ourselves, was added a party of eight men, armed with guns; and away we all marched, in very irregular order, to the field of battle—a particularly dismal-looking wood, full of fine old trees. Here we were all told off under the orders of the keeper, each man being apportioned his place.

On the way, my friend gave me a little advice about my double gun.

"What are you loaded with?" he said.

"Swan-shot in one barrel, pheasant-shot in the other," I replied.

"Here," he said, handing me a bullet; "draw your charge of small shot, and put that in for a pill for the wolf."

"But it is too small," I said.

"Roll it in paper, to make it a tight fit, then," he exclaimed.

And then as I did so, and proceeded to insert it, he cried out at me furiously.

"What's the matter?" I said.

"Matter!" he exclaimed; "why, you have not taken out the shot."

"Well, it won't matter."

"Matter! Why, the shot will send your bullet anywhere but into the wolf's body."

"Well, then there are the shots," I said.

"Pooh, man, what good will small shot do? They will merely make the wolf laugh because they tickled him; for his fur is thick enough in the winter to resist small shot."

"Ah," I said, as I drew the shot and rammed down the ball, "I must have the skin."

"Let's shoot him first," said my friend, drily.

"Humph, yes," I said, laughing—"first catch your hare, then cook him."

I was then left alone, and, following the advice of my friend, I put out my cigar so as not to be scented, squatted down in the bushes so as to be hidden, and then, with a good open bit of clearing before me, I waited patiently for the wolf, wondering whether there was one after all.

I waited some time, listening to the noise of the beaters and the yelping and howling of the dogs, and at last grew so stiff, cramped, and weary that I wished I had not put out my cigar.

"Bother the wolf!" I said; "I don't believe there aint not no such person."

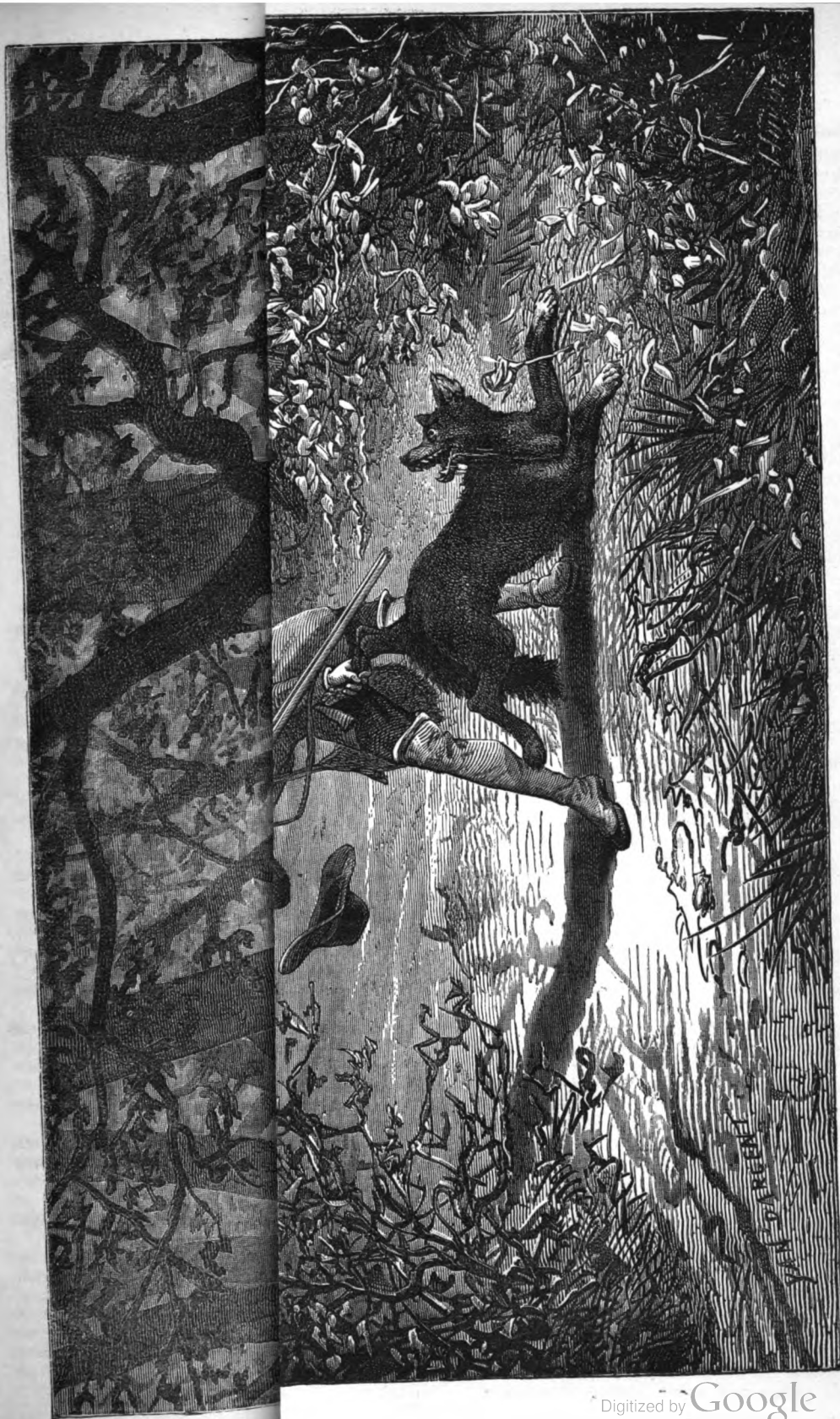
As I muttered this, I heard on my right a gentle rustling of dead leaves; so, in the hope that some animal might be approaching, I gently put aside a branch.

As I did so, a few dead leaves fell, and there was a cessation of the noise.

I remained breathless and silent for a few minutes, and then there was the same noise again; but only to cease in an instant.

Just then the wind brought the howling of the dogs, and the noise was repeated; and now it seemed to be in the midst of the brushwood some twenty paces away.

I was quite ready for whatever it might be, ex-



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pecting to see a rabbit or a pheasant; and, with my finger on the trigger, I was all eyes for my shot.

Just then I could begin to distinguish some animal creeping cautiously amongst the bushes; but what it was I could not tell.

It was evidently too large for rabbit or pheasant, and I began to think it might be one of the dogs; for I remembered that the farmer had with him a big, ugly mongrel, with a great foxy head, and I did not want to be called upon to pay a couple of guineas for the murder of a cur that would have been dear at a gift.

So I determined to wait until the animal made its appearance in the clearing; and this I did, watching attentively till I saw a great, dog-like animal come cautiously out, and look back in the direction of the sounds that came upon the breeze.

"What a fool I should have looked!" I said to myself; "why, it is the farmer's dog. Yes—no—yes—no—the farmer's dog had a thin tail, curled up tight in a round O over his back. This beast has a brush almost like a fox trailing behind him. It's the wolf—and—take that."

He took that—in fact, the bullet, which I sent him on the instant; and, to my great annoyance, I felt that I had missed.

For the wind blew the smoke back in my face, and there was not the slightest sound to be heard.

"The brute has bolted," I exclaimed.

But as the sounds left my lips, there I saw him, lying perfectly motionless upon the dead leaves, with the blood trickling from his jaws.

"Then I shall get my skin, after all," I said.

And running out, I caught the animal by one of his hind legs, to drag him into the pathway from amongst the bushes.

He was evidently not accustomed to such rude treatment, for before I had gone many paces, he seemed to revive, and turned upon me furiously, snapping, snarling, and showing a set of keen, pointed teeth, white as the finest ivory.

I must own that I was alarmed, and would rather have been anywhere else. However, the last thing I thought of was to go, and—fortunately for myself, perhaps—I did not.

As it was, I got my gun up to my shoulder with one hand, and as the beast made a vigorous effort to get at me, disarranging my aim somewhat, and making my soft felt hat fall to the ground, I held on to his hind paw, and fired the barrel loaded with shot.

It was so close a shot that it gave the monster his quietus; and as I stood wiping the perspiration from my forehead, the dogs and hunters came rushing up, to surround the dead wolf, and abuse it with such a volley of ill names, that it was enough to make the dead beast's hair stand on end.

Just then, up came the farmer, and he took the polish off the whole party, for he swore at his dead enemy till he was red in the face, and perfectly breathless. He kicked it, he danced upon it, he insulted it to the last pitch; and then the brute was carried back to the village in procession, a man holding each paw, and the farmer bringing up the rear with the tail.

I thought I should get the skin in peace then,

though it was terribly dirty; but it was not so, for the keeper had to have his turn, he taking the dead wolf to every farmer in the neighbourhood, one and all of whom made him a present. In addition, he received the head money given for destroying the beast.

At last he brought it back, after netting about five pounds of our money by the transaction; but I did not know the animal when he brought it back, for it seemed that everybody had had a kick at the dead enemy, or given it a dig with a pitchfork or scythe.

"Shall I skin the wolf for you now, monsieur?" he said, meekly.

"Shall you what?" I said, in a vexed and disappointed tone.

"Shall I skin the wolf, monsieur?" he said.

"No," I exclaimed, "you had better put one on and bury it decently."

For I really believe it had hardly a scrap of its former thick, shaggy coat left. If it had, it was so plastered with blood and mud as to be undistinguishable.

That was my first wolf.

Three Hundred Virgins.

A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS.

CHAPTER XXIX.—A TROUBLESOME PATIENT.

GRACE MONROE had need to cling to her companion for protection, the loud savage shriek being repeated, and a wild-looking figure approaching slowly out of the darkness.

At first it was evident that they were not seen; for Deborah came on eagerly scanning the ground around her, as if looking for some one lying asleep; but as she came close up she caught sight of Grace Monroe, and dashed at her with maniacal fury. In fact, so sudden was the onslaught, that but for Helston's promptness, serious injury would have been inflicted.

He darted between them, and caught Deborah in his arms, trying hard to secure her hands.

Deborah uttered a series of hideous shrieks, and tore at him in her struggles to escape. Then, suddenly, she seized his shoulders, placed her face close to his, so as to gaze in his face, evidently struggling with her memory till she recognized him, when a complete change came over the poor creature, and, clinging to one of his arms, she laid her head upon his shoulder, completely ignoring the presence of Grace.

Helston felt his painful position acutely, the more so that a low sigh escaped from Grace, and she turned away her head to begin slowly walking away.

"Grace," he exclaimed, passionately, "would you leave me? Do you not see the woman is mad?"

Grace turned, with the result that Deborah's fury was renewed, and she struggled to free herself from Helston's restraining arms and fly at her rival.

It was all that Helston could do to hold her, and he only quieted the infuriated woman by hastily whispering to Grace to go farther away, his heart throbbing with pain as he saw the poor girl walk

some little distance towards the sea, to sit down upon the shore, and bury her face in her hands.

"Deborah, this is madness," he said to the distraught creature, blaming himself the next moment for his ill-chosen words.

"Has she gone?" whispered Deborah, clinging to him, and peering up in his face as if to make sure that he spoke the truth.

"Yes," was the reply, spoken in a distant manner.

For Helston's mind was wandering as he thought of his position, and asked himself what he should do—how he should control this wild spirit that had now aroused one of the most terrible phases of mania—the homicidal?

"I mean to kill her," whispered Deborah, clinging to him more tightly. "I have been searching for her and hunting her these many hours, but she always ran to the hot lava and hid herself, or else skimmed along in the smoke on the top. But I shall have her—I shall have her yet!"

"Come, sit down," said Helston. "Be calm."

He spoke to her, hardly knowing what he said; and then bitterly he asked himself where was his calmness and medical knowledge that he should utter platitudes to a woman in such a condition?

"Yes, let us sit down and rest, and listen to the roar of the sea, and I will tell you."

She seated herself upon the sands, retaining a tight hold upon his hand till he followed her example, when she made his nerves thrill with horror as she went on in a low, hissing whisper—

"Yes, I mean to kill her. I followed her about with a great stone big enough to crush her wicked head; but, as soon as she found I knew where she was lain down to sleep, she kept getting up and laughing at me as she went to a distance; and then, mocking at me the while, laid down again."

"And did you follow her?" said Helston, to humour the speaker.

"Follow her? Yes. And I shall follow her till I crush her head with the great stone, for she is a demon. It isn't that cold, smooth-faced, hateful girl, Grace Monroe; she was killed by the fire. This is a wicked spirit, who has taken her shape so as to tempt you, and try and tear you from her who loves you. Charles, don't listen to her, or she'll lead you to death and perdition, if I don't kill her first."

"You must not talk like that," said Helston, hurriedly, as he ran over in his mind the possibility of binding her hand and foot, and so rendering her helpless till the paroxysm had passed.

"Not talk so?" cried Deborah. "Ah, you don't believe she is a demon. She is so artful, that she has deceived you. But last night she was mocking me hour after hour, leading me from place to place, and trying to get me to follow her over the burning lava, so that I might be destroyed as she wants to destroy you. Do you hear me? I tell you she is a horrible demon, trying to destroy us both. I should have been dead long ago, if I had listened to her mocking laugh."

Helston laid his hand upon her burning temples, as, with the other, he felt her rapid pulse.

"Yes," she said, with a sigh of pleasure, as she nestled towards him, "I knew you would love me,

Charles. But we must be on our guard, or that wretch will come and try to slay you. But lie down to sleep, you are weary. I will watch over you the while, and crush a hundred such creatures if they dare to approach you."

"No," he said, humouring her fancy, "I am not sleepy yet. But tell me about her."

"About that demon?" she said, eagerly. "Yes, I will. She has been trying to get me to pursue her; and when I have refused, she has come close up, and mocked me, and told me that she loved you, and that you loved her, as if I did not know that Grace Monroe was dead, and this was a mocking demon. But though I would not listen to her, she said such things of your love for her that at times she maddened me. She told me you kissed and caressed her; that you passed your hands through her long wavy hair, and threw it over your cheek, while you mingled your kisses with hers; and that as you drew her so tightly to your breast that she could hardly breathe, you kept on telling her, in tones that never tired, that you loved her more and more every minute you were together. Then this would be more than I could bear, and I ran at her to crush her head with the great stone I carried; and then—then—"

"Well," he said, for Deborah paused, listening.

"What was that?" she said. "I heard a sob."

"The restless sea," he replied, "sighing and sobbing on the shore."

"No wonder," she muttered, half to herself, as she let herself sink down till she lay resting on her elbow, but with her head against Helston's breast, and one hand tightly retaining his—"no wonder that it sighs, and sobs, and weeps upon the sands; for it is all tears—tears, salt tears—the tears of the weary souls who have wept their lives away since the world began. I nearly wept myself away while that creature kept me shut up in the cabin of the ship. Hark, how it sighs again! Poor sea, poor sea, poor sea!"

A hope sprang up in Helston's breast. This mad paroxysm had lasted a long time now, and Deborah must be fearfully exhausted, having probably never slept nor partaken of food since her rescue from the cabin. She might then sleep heavily in a short time, and so relieve him from his terrible dilemma, the possibility being that she might prove less dangerous when she awoke.

"Yes," cried the wretched woman. "She maddened me at last with her lies—for they were lies, as you only love me—till I could bear it no longer, and I rushed at her; when twenty—a hundred—thousands of times—she fled right to the burning lava, and walked over it, thinking I should follow, and be burned to cinders, and ashes, and dust; while she stood mocking and laughing at me, and then returned to pursue you."

"But you did not follow her," said Helston, quietly.

"Follow her? No. She was cunning, but so was I; and I would not go, but hung back, and went and sat down by the sea, till she came and tempted me again. It was very horrible; but I was not afraid, for I had your love to comfort me."

"Poor soul," half murmured Helston, and she sank lower in the soft sand.

"There," she whispered, taking his hand and laying it upon her forehead, "keep that thus; it is cool and soft, and pleasant; for my head burns as if it was full of lava—hot, molten lava. Do you know what it is?"

"You are very feverish," he said, quietly, as he let his hand rest where she had placed it.

"Feverish!" she cried, with a low, curious laugh. "No; it is her words. She seemed to dart them into my brain, and they have lain there since and burned. But it doesn't matter; I shall kill her soon. Listen, Charles: I told you she was a demon?"

"Yes," he said, bending over her face, just dimly seen by the faint light of the stars.

"Well," continued Deborah, in a dreamy way, and speaking very slowly, "if she came to me only as a demon, I could not do it; the stone would pass through her head as if it were her shadow. But she comes like Grace Monroe was when alive. She tempts me in that way; and as she is in that body, I can crush her, as I shall crush her, when she lies asleep. Stop! What's that?"

She spoke these last words with a return of her former excitement, and half rose to her elbow.

"The sea," said Helston, quietly. "Only the falling of the waves upon the shore."

"Yes," she said, sinking back, "the falling of the floods of salt, salt tears upon the shore—the tears of thousands of millions of poor, lost, weary women who loved—and loved—and loved—too well; some to be despised and cast away—too well, some, but never to gain one gentle word—one loving, kind caress—one kiss from the lips to whose music they had listened—music never meant for them. Poor souls, poor souls, poor souls! So hard, so bitter and hard to love so fondly, and so well. Ah, Charles, pity them, as I do, even now, as their floods of salt, salt tears come pouring on these thirsty sands! To love and weep because their love was never returned by the cruel, hard men to whom they were devoted, and for whose one tender word they would lie down and die!"

Her voice was faint, low, and musical now, heard as it was in the solemn silence of the night; and as she spoke, weeping gently the while, there came the low, soft, deep moan of the sea, as the flood indeed poured softly on the sands, now dark and heavy, now crested with a faint bluish light, spangled and scintillating with gold.

"Poor, bleeding hearts," muttered Deborah, "weep—weep—weep, for you are to be pitied, and your troubles sore."

Helston started, for at that moment he heard a low, piteous sigh, and became aware that Grace had crept noiselessly to his side, that she was touching him with one hand, and that hand was again withdrawn as Deborah spoke more loudly.

"Yes, there it is again—sigh, sob, and moan—tears—floods of tears—the world is bathed in tears that never cease to flow—to flow—flow—"

Her voice trailed off into a whisper; and then she began to mutter softly, so feebly that Helston, as he bent over her, barely detected his own name.

He softly lifted his hand, burning now like the brow upon which it had been laid, and she did not

move, for she was breathing softly and regularly now.

Then he tried softly to remove his right hand, which was tightly clasped in hers; but at the first movement she clutched at it sharply, and began muttering rapidly, so he let it rest.

It was only with a feeling of acute misery, though, at his heart, for he knew that Grace must have heard much of what had passed; and now, though he had not noticed her departure, she was gone, having glided away, as he was trying to remove his hand, and disappeared in the darkness.

For quite an hour Helston stayed by Deborah's side, for each time he tried to withdraw his hand, her fingers closed upon it more tightly; but at last, when he had as good as determined to snatch it away, the bony fingers relaxed—Deborah's hand lay listlessly at his side, and she slept the deep sleep of utter exhaustion.

Helston rose softly, marked the place as well as he could where Deborah lay, and then went hurriedly over the sands in the direction where it seemed to him that Grace must have gone.

CHAPTER XXX.—MORE TROUBLES.

HELSTON walked noiselessly along the sands, expecting each moment to come upon Grace, seated with her face buried in her hands; but though he peered carefully right and left with every step he took, he could see no sign of her.

He dared not call out for fear of awakening the frantic woman, who otherwise might relieve them of her animate presence for hours; and still his eyes did not suffice to make known where the poor girl had strayed.

He quickened his pace, and ran down to where the sand was hard and the waves curled in, then turned his back to the faint glow shed by the luminous life of the waters, and, shading his eyes, he looked slowly and carefully all along the sweep of sand.

But no—not a sign; and, with a strange feeling of trouble oppressing him, he once more began his search—running now at random here and there over the sands.

She had crept close to him, he remembered, and touched him. "Then she had silently crept away."

What did it mean—was it a kind of farewell after listening to Deborah's burning words of love?

Ah, that was absurd! She knew he loved her, and that those frantic words uttered by Deborah were but the ravings of a madwoman. And yet, when he came to think of it—to sit there and see him half held in the embrace of a woman who had openly avowed her love, and to see him lean there by her side, one hand pressed upon this woman's head, and the other tightly pinioned in her fingers—it must have been horrible for the poor girl.

"What must she have thought and felt?" he exclaimed, half aloud.

He ran on, growing each moment more excited as he scanned the broad reach of sand, twice going near Deborah, who was sleeping heavily.

"What should I have felt under such circumstances?" he asked himself. "Even knowing that some rival was half mad—what should I have felt if

I had seen Grace held in his arms, passively listening while he poured into her ears the passionate tale of his love? Suppose it was to soothe him in a mad paroxysm, what should I have done?"

Helston paused in the darkness to wipe the streaming perspiration from his brow; and then, with a groan, he answered his own question.

"I should have thought her faithless, and gone half mad."

What should he do?

It was a question he could not answer; for the more he searched, the more he became convinced of the fact that Grace had wandered right away; and what if, in despair out there in the darkness of that wild place, she had thrown herself into the sea!

His hair seemed as if stirred by invisible fingers; and, in his despair, he called to her loudly again and again; but for answer there was the sullen wash of the shore.

It was too horrible a thing to contemplate, and he told himself that it was impossible; pressed his hands to his forehead for a few moments, to try and collect himself, and then ran down to where the waves came slowly rolling in, walked in a few yards, stooped down, and, scooping up the water, bathed his burning forehead for a few minutes, and then stepped forth cool and collected.

He paused for a few minutes to think; and then, knowing that south of where he stood the strip of sand was a *cul de sac* formed by the lava on one side, the sea on the other, meeting at last at the point where the lava had poured into the sea, he ran down there, and, easily convincing himself that Grace was not there, commenced searching northward, going to and fro beating the ground in zigzags from the lava to the sea, even as a dog would hunt a field over for birds, and thus thoroughly covered every few yards of the sands, so that it would have been impossible for her he sought to escape his search.

Going over the ground like this, it was quite half an hour before he passed and repassed Deborah, who still lay calmly sleeping; and going by softly, so that she might not be awakened, he continued his hunt, ever progressing farther and farther north, but with a dull dread still increasing as he went on.

All was still on the island of refuge where Laurent, 'Thello, and the women were; and, as he turned his back and faced the sea, all seemed so peaceful and calm there, that he seemed to realize what Grace must have felt—that all this weary care and anxiety was so much waste of energy—so much fighting against fate; and that it would be better to walk quietly out into the placid waters, now one purple depth, spangled with stars, where he might sleep, and be at rest.

He smiled bitterly though the next moment, as he thought how opposed these thoughts were to the practice of his life, which had been one long fight against the powers of death; and with renewed energy he walked on to and fro—to and fro between the lava and the sea, his zigzag approaches to the north growing longer at every turn, as the lava headed off to the north-west, the sea coast to the north-east; and still there was no sign.

He was obliged to argue with himself that the

poor girl had had ample time by now to be miles away, when he grew despondent, and felt sure that she was somewhere floating on the waves that beat the shore.

Once he was startled by stumbling upon some animal, which started up with a savage squeal, alarmed a score more, and went off at full gallop.

He hardly heeded the incident then, but a few minutes after it forced itself back upon his attention, and he could not help feeling that here was a source of future supply for them when other provisions failed—that was, he said sadly, if they should require food.

There was other life, too, left in the island; for, farther on, he caught his foot against a round, yielding body, which gave a snatch, and was heard rushing off directly, with a peculiar noise, over the sand.

"Serpent," he muttered to himself, passing on still; and, to his surprise, he found that here the sands were teeming with life—insects, reptiles, and other small animals, that had evidently fled before the lava flood towards the sea, and been prisoned between the two tides.

No matter what he encountered, though, the great horror of the past seemed upon all, and animals and reptiles fled at his approach, leaving the path quite free.

The fatigue he had felt in the early part of the night had now quite passed away, and he tramped steadily on, hour after hour, with the step of one determined to proceed to the end; and so it was that as the stars slowly paled, and a faint light began to appear in the east, he was apparently unwearied in his search.

But as the day fully broke, and then the sun rolled up and illumined the whole of the black stretch of land, there was no sign of her he sought; and he sank down desolate, unnerved, and completely prostrate.

At last he rose, and selecting the highest point he could find, he took another long-continued gaze.

But no, Grace had disappeared from the scene; and, in a slow, mechanical way, he began to trudge back towards the place where he had left Deborah sleeping.

He had traversed many, many miles during the night in his zigzag course; but in a direct line he was but a short distance from the causeway that was in progress, and on reaching the spot, he found that Deborah was still sleeping, but the women were already, under the guidance of 'Thello, hard at work.

As he came opposite to them, and received their salutations, he, for the first time, saw Laurent walking slowly about in a helpless way, apparently continuing his search for something, while Mary Dance was close behind, ready to turn away as soon as she saw that she was noticed.

Weary as he was, Helston set himself to help in the task of making the causeway; but before they had been busy an hour, and long before it was time to cease for some of the scant refreshment that they still had, it was evident that the clouds that had been gathering for so long above their heads portended rain; and this soon began to fall, giving warning first with a few heavy drops.

These were hardly heeded at first, save that they made the lava hiss where they fell, and send up a few tiny puffs of steam.

All at once, however, there was a strange stillness in the air—not a breath of wind could be heard; but in the distance there was a low, dull roaring, and over the sea, as Helston glanced at it, there was a dense black bank of clouds, and below this a long low line of grey mist sweeping the sea, and it was from there that the dull, ever-increasing roar came.

There was but a few minutes' roaring, and then the rain was upon them, accompanied by thunder, that seemed to make the heavens rock, even as they were laced and netted by the vivid violet and pale blue lightning. As for the rain, it came down in sheets, making those who were exposed to its violence cower on the earth, where it seemed to beat and flog them savagely.

It was terrible in its violence, and there was no shelter, the women only cowering and clinging together to avoid its fury; while in a moment they were doubly hidden from Helston's sight, the rain forming a veil that no vision could pierce; while from every spot where the lava had spread came a furious, hissing sound, and the dense clouds of steam rose up to meet the falling flood.

Helston crouched like the rest beneath the pitiless, blinding storm, which the sand drank up as it fell; and as he lay cowering there, beaten and flogged by the great spouts, watching the dense, white clouds that rose from the island, he could not help seeing that if this rain continued for any length of time the lava would soon be so hardened on the surface as to bear the weight of a human being.

At times the clouds would extend—beaten down as they were by the incessant downfall—as far as the spot where he was lying; but, for the most part, they were carried across the island.

It was fortunate that this was the case, for already the women were suffering terribly from the stifling steam and heat.

The hissing roar continued, deafening them; and even when the thunder ceased as quickly as it came on, the rain still streamed down in cataracts; and the lava, apparently unquenchable, spat and belched forth hydrogenous vapours as the water smote its surface, and was decomposed.

As soon as he could stand up against the blinding rain, Helston rose, to see that steaming torrents of heated water were pouring off the lava every here and there, charged with grey, frothy mud, which was the finer part of the volcanic ash, and this was being deposited in every crack and crevice.

The steam was so dense, that he could not see those who were on the island; but he shouted, and a reply came back telling him that all were safe, but greatly distressed by the heat and horrible vapours.

He had hardly had his answer, when, as he stood wondering what was Grace's fate, a wretched, bedraggled object crawled to him on her hands and knees, drenched, piteous-looking, and cowed—it was Deborah.

He could do nothing for her but say a few words of comfort; and with these she seemed content,

cowering down, with her hands embracing her knees, and her chin resting upon them. Shelter there was none; so, in a kind of remorse for her sufferings, he stood between her and the quarter from which the rain beat, keeping some of its violence from her.

The rain continued all that day, and far into the evening, when it ceased as suddenly as it had commenced; and all who suffered from it were glad, regardless of the steam, to creep close to the heated lava, which soon lent warmth to their shivering frames, but gave nothing to appease their hunger.

Before morning the storm, which seemed to have made a circle, came back again, deluging the island for many hours, during which it seemed to be turned into one vast volcano, emitting steam in enormous clouds; and when, at last, this storm passed over, to be succeeded at midday by a clear sky and brilliant sunshine, the steam still ascended.

To the great joy of all, this downpour of icy rain had done that which many days of incessant toil would hardly have accomplished, for Helston found that he could now approach the lava stream with no inconvenience; and, as he tried the dry, hard surface with caution, to see if the crust would bear him, without treacherously giving way to let him through into the awful molten flood beneath, he was startled by a cry from Mary Dance, and saw Laurent tear himself away from her, bound towards the lava, and before he could be arrested, he had taken half a dozen steps across it; and Helston felt an agonizing pang at his heart as he heard a sharp crack, and saw that the crust had given way, Laurent falling headlong on the hot, dry surface, which seemed to be yielding beneath his weight.

The Pretty Girl I Knew.

TIME flies so fast: indeed, I'm puzzled quite.

Was it ten years ago, love?—forty? True!—
Since I first saw, as in a vision bright,

The pretty girl I knew!

Her hair was brown or gold, in shade or sun;

Her brow was snowy, and her eyes were blue—
They peared in sadness, or they laughed with fun—

The pretty girl I knew!

And then her lips—a ruddy Cupid's bow;

Her cheeks—the peach blush, when the autumn's
new;

Her words—love-whispered promises in accents
low—

The pretty girl I knew!

Years orty! There she sits, hair silvered now:

Wife, with a love that strengthened as it grew—
Whose glamour's o'er me, for she's still, I vow,

The pretty girl I knew!

At the dinner table of an hotel somewhere in Ohio, not long since, a "green one," unable to resist the cravings of his appetite, began upon a large dish of rice before him. A waiter mildly informed him that it was intended for dessert, and that he had better eat something else first. Greeny replied, "Desert! I don't care if it's a wilderness—it's good, and before very long I'm going to eat it."

Liquid Light.

DOES any one ever pause to think of the origin of the now popular mineral oil which is sold everywhere, under a score of different names?

It is but comparatively a few years since patches of land in America, containing boggy places full of a foul, black, unctuous mud, were looked upon with utter disgust, till some lucky person "struck ile," as it was called—found, in digging a well, that a strange thick liquid was tapped, instead of water, to come gushing out, and, by accident reaching fire, igniting and blazing away in waste for a considerable length of time.

The curiosity being visited, the similarity of the mud to that in the contained patches became evident; and those who owned or secured them awoke to the fact that they were on the high road to becoming millionaires.

For the rock oil, or petroleum, only needed purifying to become a valuable article of commerce; and in some wells it could be pumped up, or gushed out, at the rate of many gallons a minute.

Soon, however, the vast abundance produced by the oil wells, and rendered available for trade by the indefatigable scheming and industry of the Americans, glutted the market. "Ile" became a drug, and from diminishing in value was soon lying by thousands of barrels at the wells, unable to find a buyer.

There were other vicissitudes, too. Some wells gave out, and refused to produce more; others there were where the oil, on being tapped deep down in some boring, came up so freely that large quantities flowed over into the streams and were wasted.

This paralysis of the oil trade lasted for some time; but by degrees, as the value of the oil and its fine light-giving properties were realized, enterprising firms entered largely into the manufacture of lamps, improvements being made year by year, till at last, not only in the United Kingdom, but in Belgium and Germany, the mineral oil lamp became popular, the demand steadily rose, and now, not only has the value of the oil increased largely, but it has far more than doubled its price of a few months ago.

As may be surmised, this mineral oil, or kerosene, as it is generally called, in America, is a volcanic product; in fact, if it were termed liquid coal, it would not be inappropriate, for after purifying we have it burning with the clear bright light of that ethereal essence of coal—gas.

At present it principally comes from America; and it is by the monopoly thus given to the trade, and the combination of the producers, that the present high price is maintained. There is, however, no doubt that if the matter were properly managed, Turkey would produce mineral oils largely, even as would also Russia. Many of her low-lying, blasted steppes are rich in the commodity, especially in the neighbourhood of the Ural Sea, but it is clumsily procured, and the waste is tremendous.

As we have said, these oils are known under a number of fancy names, each dealer having his own particular term. Crystal, crystalline, luxoleum, and Dallas, are all names given; and of course these mineral oils must be held mentally distinct from

those of vegetable origin—colza, or rape; and the animal oils—seal, sperm, and the like.

The Dallas oil is one of the best known, and is marked by its purity and water-like clearness; and this oil is the one adopted by Messrs. King and Browne, of Wigmore-street, one of the firms of enterprising lamp manufacturers by whose ingenuity these oils can be burned with a brilliant—really most refulgent—flame, and a total absence of odour. Their Brighton lamp, Duplex, Silber, Paragon, and other flat-wicked lamps, have of late become most thoroughly known, and should be adopted wherever gas is not obtainable, and in many cases where it is, as being safer, more convenient, and giving equal light without the accompaniment of a blackened ceiling.

A variety of stories are told of the first discoveries of kerosene. One man who "struck ile" is said to have accumulated wealth so rapidly, that in a very short time he was unable, by the most lavish expenditure, to get rid of his income.

One of his feats is said to have been the presentation of a theatre to an actress in New York. But there is a shady side to the story; for the supply ceased, the wells being pumped out, and the result was at last that the oil millionaire became so poor that he was reduced to the necessity of acting as issuer of tickets at the very theatre he once presented as a lavish gift.

There is an abundance of such anecdotes connected with the oil trade, and the history of the Oil Wells case must yet be fresh in many readers' recollection. Fortunes have been made over the trade, again and again, and as often lost, for the abundance at first produced ample speculation.

At the present time, however, the mineral oil has grown into a domestic necessity, from its brilliant light and general cleanliness. The lamp manufacturing that has arisen from the demand has also developed largely; and doubtless, with the steady, equable demand that there now is for the commodity, its price will become moderated to one between the limits of extreme cheapness and dearness. And other countries will help to secure this by striving to reach the European market with their own supplies of liquid light.

Of a well-known actress, who in later life wore a good deal of rouge and powder, Jerrold observed, "She should have a hoop about her with a notice, 'Beware of the paint.'"

Now that winter has come, and ladies are looking forward to many a pleasant evening spent in the enjoyment of the dance, they often forget the attendant fatigue, until the exhaustion of the following day reminds them that every pleasure has its alloy. This fatigue is in great measure produced by the tight ligature or garter with which the stockings are fastened, hindering the free circulation of the blood. Medical men are unanimous in declaring the use of garters to be a most fruitful source of disease. Every lady desiring health and comfort should at once provide herself with a pair of the new patent stocking suspenders, made by Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London. The price is only 3s. per pair, of any draper, or post free for two extra stamps.

Si Slocum; or, the American Trapper and his Dog.

CHAPTER VI.—A BLAST BEFORE THE STORM.

KATE TOWNSEND uttered a low cry of dread, and flew to her father to throw herself upon his breast as he stood menacing and angry before her lover.

"How dare you presume—how dare you set yourself to lead away this foolish, disobedient girl!" cried Mr. Townsend again, in a voice trembling with passion.

"Mr. Townsend," said Wallace, quietly, "this is not the first time you have called me scoundrel. I am no scoundrel."

"Then, pray, what do you call yourself, sir?" cried Mr. Townsend, with a sneer.

"Your daughter's honest, true lover," said the young man, flushing, as he met the eyes of the trembling girl—"one who is ready to submit to every insult you heap upon him, for Kate's sake, until the day comes when you say to me—Wallace Foster, I ask your pardon. I have been mistaken in you. Take her, my son, and forgive me."

"You are a scoundrel, sir; worse—a hypocrite. And I believe you are mad."

"Oh! papa, papa!" moaned Kate.

"Silence, you silly child," he cried. "Ready to listen to the promises and praise of every money-hunting, plausible rascal who thinks you will turn out a good match."

"Oh, papa, this is too cruel," cried the girl, with spirit.

"Silence, child!" he thundered.

"Yes, Kate, be silent," said Wallace, quietly. "I do not mind; it will only make the apology the harder when it comes."

"Your insolence is beyond bearing," thundered Mr. Townsend; "and if I were not so old a man, and wanting in strength, I'd horsewhip you."

"Sir—Mr. Townsend," said Wallace, slowly, "this is no insolence, and you know it. I love your daughter—how well, she only knows."

"Yes, yes," cried Kate, with a look of emotion.

"But I own I have done wrong in asking for these clandestine meetings."

"Generous youth!" sneered Mr. Townsend.

"I ask your forgiveness for them, sir; for I can afford to wait. Kate, darling, you were right—we must wait patiently; and I part from you now happy and contented, knowing that, come what may, you will be mine, and mine alone."

"Oh, this is insufferable," cried Mr. Townsend.

"I will relieve you of my presence, sir," said the young man, quietly. "Kate, I grieve that my impetuous nature should have led you into this trouble. Mr. Townsend, as a gentleman and a father, remember this—it would be cruel to visit my fault upon her. Take time for reflection, sir."

"Psha! Go, sir—go!" cried Mr. Townsend, who was almost beside himself with rage.

"Papa," said Kate, firmly, "it was not all his fault, but as much mine; for I own it—I do love him dearly."

"Silence!" roared Mr. Townsend.

"God bless you for that true, honest avowal," cried the young man. "And now, good-bye, Kate, we will wait and hope."

He made as if to take Kate's hand, but her father interposed, and pointed to the door, when Wallace Foster stood for awhile looking at him fixedly.

"As you will, sir," he said. "I am not angry, for you do all this in ignorance."

"Go, sir—go; leave these premises—they are mine."

"Yes, Mr. Townsend, I go," said Wallace—"go to work in your interest, and for the happiness of your child."

The young people's eyes met for a moment, and then Wallace Foster turned and left the room.

"A scoundrel—an insufferable, beggarly, insolent scoundrel!" cried the old man. "But he shall smart for it; and so shall everybody who has helped you to this disobedience."

He strode up and down the room as the poor girl sank sobbing into a chair, and covered her face with her hands.

"He shall soon reap the reward of his insolence. And as for you, madam, if your mind is so terribly love-sick, it shall be cured with the right medicine. You want a husband. Well, you shall have one; but it shall be the one of my choosing."

"Oh, papa! papa!" sobbed the girl.

"Yes, madam, it is fit that I should know what is best for you, and I will show you I do. Now, look here, I will have no more nonsense. You are too young to feel more than a passing regret for this upstart, and Vasquez will soon teach you to forget. Now, I will be obeyed; and, mark this, in less than a month from now, you are to be his wife."

"I will not," cried the girl, starting up.

"Hold your tongue," cried her father, "and don't expose your disobedience before the woman of this house. Here she is."

Kate stood trembling with fear, mingled with passion, for she possessed some of her parent's obstinacy; and just then Ruth Slocum entered the room, curtsying to her husband's employer, as she gave Kate a look of commiseration.

"Now, look here, Mrs. Slocum," cried Mr. Townsend; "I've grown about tired of your husband's rowdy, western ways."

"I'm sure, sir, my husband has always done his duty by you and yours," said Ruth, with spirit.

"Exactly," cried Mr. Townsend—"by turning the house I lend him to dwell in into a place of rendezvous for my foolish child, and that upstart who has just gone."

"My husband knew nothing of it whatever, sir," said Ruth.

"There, you hear that, Kate," cried Mr. Townsend—"you hear this brazen woman own that she encourages the visits of this fellow here without her husband's knowledge! Will nothing convince you, you foolish girl, of the character of the people with whom you have got yourself linked?"

"Indeed, papa, you wrong Mrs. Slocum," cried Kate, through her tears. "It was my fault, and quite by accident that Mr. Foster came here. I had called to see Mrs. Slocum at your wish—and—and Wallace followed me. Don't blame her."

"Don't intercede for me, miss, if your papa likes to be unjust. Perhaps it was wrong of me; if so, let him blame me, but not try to visit it on my husband's head."

"You are a bad, hypocritical lot; and, if the truth were known, are leagued in together with this young Foster to share in the plunder when my child is coaxed away; but I'll root out the whole affair, and put an end to it."

Saying this, he caught Kate's hand in his, and strode out of the place.

CHAPTER VII.—TWO CONFESSIONS.

ABOUT a fortnight before the occurrences in the preceding chapters, Si Slocum was busy at work arranging some receipts for goods delivered in one of the outer offices, when Vasquez passed through, putting on his over-coat, and, not seeing Si, banged the door after him, went out, paused for a moment to light a cigarette, and was gone.

Si kept on with his task, got all his notes in order, placed them in a clip, and then, after hanging them in their place on the office wall, prepared to take his own departure.

"Ah," he sighed, as he looked out at the glorious western sky, where the sun was setting, "I wish I were far out on the prairie now, or high up among the mountains; I was never meant for this sort of life. Fancy me sorting office papers, and tending draught horses, when I might have a glorious, full-blooded mustang between my legs, and be flying like the wind."

He leaned his elbows on the window-sill, looked out for a time, and then, as the glory began to fade, he came away.

"What a discontented fool I am! There, I know what it is, I want a good square meal, I reckon, and a talk to Rewth. I shall be all right then."

As he crossed the office to go, his foot kicked against a packet of papers, tied up with a scrap of string.

Si paused for a moment, and then picked up the papers.

"Somebody must have dropped them," he said, turning them over; but it was too dark now to see what they were, so he thrust them into his breast pocket, and gave them a slap. "Maybe they're of consequence, so I won't leave them here. They'll rest till the morning."

They did rest till the morning, for, on entering his house, Si took off his loose jacket and hung it against the wall, so as to be free and easy in his outer woollen shirt and trousers, and the weather coming in hot, there the jacket hung untouched, and the packet of papers was forgotten.

Si Slocum was on his way home while Ruth was cogitating after her encounter with Mr. Townsend, and talking to herself.

"Why, how can I blame Si for having things on his mind, when I've been keeping all this from him?" she said. "Never mind, I guess I'll make a clean breast of it all, and take my whipping like a good gal, and have it over. He won't be very cross with me, I guess."

She busied herself over her household duties, giving an eye to little Freddie in the yard; but, see-

ing that he was quite happy with Jerry, she did not interfere.

"It would be very hard, though, if Mr. Townsend were to discharge Si for my foolishness—though, poor boy, he wouldn't mind, because it would take us away again into the West. And I don't know that I should mind; for, after all, there's a deal here that aint nice, and makes one very uncomfortable, though there are no b'ars nor Injuns, nor rough mining fellows. Ah, well, let it come as it may, I'm fond of Si, and I think he cares just a little bit 'bout Ruth and Freddie, so it won't much matter. Here he is."

In fact, Si entered the yard; but instead of coming into the house, he busied himself about the horses, and soon after there was the noise of galloping and the shouts of the child, when, on looking out, there was Freddie galloping round and round the yard, sticking his little knees into the pony's side, and feeling evidently no more fear than if he were seated on the scrap of carpet in front of the fire.

"Yew'll get that child killed, one of these days, Si," said Ruth, as he entered.

And then, as he took his seat by the table, she placed herself on her knees at his feet, and put her hands together in a supplicatory manner.

"Wal," he said, "and what does this mean?"

"Please, Si, I'm come to confess."

"Go it," he said, smiling, as he stroked her hair.

"Please, Si, I reckon I've been very wicked."

"Air yew?" he said. "Has Jerry been making love tew yew?"

"For shame," she cried, giving him a sound box on the ears. "I won't have it, Si."

"Wal, I reckon I've got it," he said, rubbing his cheek. "But go ahead."

"Si," she said, getting hold of his hand, "I've been keeping something back from yew, and I guess it makes me pine."

"Wal, I'm glad to hear that, Rewth," he exclaimed, joyfully; "for I've been keeping something back from yew, and I guess it makes me pine."

"I knew yew had, Si," she cried.

"Did yew? How did yew know it?" he said, wonderingly.

"Because yew're so transparent. Yew're just like a piece of glass, Si, and I always know when there's anything wrong."

"Wal, I s'pose I am," he said, quietly. "But I tell yew what, old woman, we're both in the mess, so let yew and I shake hands on it, and cry square."

"But suppose, Si, I had been doing something very dreadful," cried Ruth, gazing up in his honest eyes—"would you forgive me?"

He laughed a quiet, satisfied kind of laugh, as he stroked her hair and gazed proudly down at her, but he did not speak.

"Why don't you answer me?" she said.

"There aint no answer to that riddle, Rewth," he said, quietly.

"Riddle?"

"Wal, yes; yew asked me something, my gal, as couldn't never be."

"And do you feel to trust me like that, Si?" she said, with the tears gathering in her eyes.

"Why, of course I do," he said, laughing. "But, I say, old gal, hadn't we better cry squares, and say no more about it?"

"But don't you want to know what I've kept from you?" she said, wonderingly.

"Wal, no," he said—"I don't know that I dew. But I want my tea."

"Ah, but, Si, I must know what you've been keeping from me, so I shall tell yew first."

"Very well," he said, quietly. "Only I guess yew'd better be quick, 'fore I get ravenous."

"Why, Si," she said, "it isn't long since yew had your dinner."

"Guess it's long enough ago for me to get hungry again," he said, "so gee out."

So Ruth told him how she had let the lovers meet at their house, after relating the first accidental encounter, and finishing with Mr. Townsend's visit.

"Wal?" said Si.

"Well?" said Ruth, looking at him.

"Wal, go on," he said.

"That's all," said Ruth.

"That's all. What, aint there no more?"

"No," she said; "and you'll forgive me, won't you?"

"Forgive you?" he exclaimed. "Why, Rewth, lass, I don't see nothing so very bad in that. I thought it would be ever so much worse. Mine's awful, compared to that."

"Is it?" she said, anxiously.

And her woman's curiosity began to rise.

"Yes," he said, "mine's what Jerry would call 'dreffle wicked.' Yew see, Rewth, I've fell in love with a terrible hansum gal down close to the wharf."

Ruth half withdrew her hand as she gazed straight in her husband's face, and then she detected the sly twinkle in his eye.

"Stuff," she said, seating herself on his knee, putting one arm round his neck, and kissing him.

"You couldn't make me believe that, Si."

"Wal, no," he said; "s'pose I couldn't. But, look here, Rewth, old Townsend may cut up rough soon as he likes, for I'm 'bout tired of the location. Things is going wrong there, and I didn't tell yew."

"Poor Miss Kate," cried Ruth; "but tell me how."

"Wal," he said, "I don't know as it 'll hurt her; but there's something wrong. Do you know what forgery is?"

"Yes—imitating people's handwriting."

"Right, Rewth! Yew've hit that nail right on the head, I guess. Wal, look here, my gal, I come sudden one day on Mr. Vasquez, there, busy writing; and when he see me he blotted off what he'd written on his desk, and seemed in a hurry to go. Just then, Mr. Townsend opens the office door, when, puff, the top sheet of Mr. Vasquez's blotting paper was blown out of the window into the warehouse yard unbeknown to Vasquez. Do you follow me?"

"Yes," said Ruth; "go on."

"Wal, I went down, picked up that sheet of blotting paper, doubled it up, and put it in my pocket, and then went back to the office, whar thar was Vasquez, with his arm resting all over his blotting paper, talking to Mr. Townsend.

"I hadn't been thar a moment, before Mr. Towns-

end goes; and I heard Vasquez give a sort of sigh of relief; and then what does he do but hurriedly tear off the top sheet of his blotting paper, crumple it up, and stuff it into the fire, where he let it burn out before he turned to go on with his work."

"And the piece yew picked up?" said Ruth, eagerly.

"Thar it is," said Si, taking it out of his pocket-book, and opening it out.

"Why, it's covered all over with Mr. Townsend's name," said Ruth, quickly.

"Yes," said Si, "and just in the same way as he signs it; but never at Mr. Vasquez's desk."

"You must tell Mr. Townsend," said Ruth, after a few moments' pause.

"No," said Si, "I don't think I shall."

"Not tell him?" cried Ruth. "Why, it's forgery."

"Yes, it's forgere," said Si; "but that aint no reason why I should tell him, I guess."

"Si!" exclaimed his wife, "why, this is dreadful!"

"Guess it is," said Si; "but if I went and told Mr. Townsend this, what do you think he'd say?"

"He'd thank you for unmasking a villain," said Ruth.

"Guess he'd jest kick me out of the office," said Si, "and call me a scoundrel."

"What, with such a paper to show?" cried Ruth.

"Guess Mr. Vasquez would say I kinder did it all myself, because I didn't like him, and then try and put a bullet threw me."

"Oh, but, Si," exclaimed his wife, "that is dreadful! What do you mean to do, then?"

"Guess I shall leave it all alone. It's nothing to dew with me, and I shall only burn my fingers if I meddle. If I dew dew anythin', I shall consult that young Foster, for he's got a good headpiece on his shoulders for this sorter thing."

"Yes!" cried Ruth, eagerly, as she saw hope for Kate Townsend in the unmasking of Vasquez's villainy. "See Mr. Foster. You know how he loves Miss Kate. Go at once, Si, and take him into your confidence."

"Don't kinder see why I should get the poor fellow's head into such a noose," said Si, drily.

"What do you mean?" cried Ruth.

"Mean?" said Si. "Why, that he's a free man now, while, as soon as he gets a wife, it'll be 'Do this,' and 'Do that'—eh?"

"Si!" exclaimed his wife, shaking a finger at him.

"All right," said Si, with mock humility, "I cave in. 'I come down!' as the 'coon said when the dead shot was taking aim. I'll see young Foster to-morrow, and see what he says tew it."

As he spoke he carefully folded the blotting paper, and replaced it in his pocket-book in the breast of his loose, woollen shirt; and then, careless of all future troubles, made a hearty meal, as if strengthening himself for contention such as he might be called upon to endure, and apparently very little troubled by the news given him by his wife.

"My good sir," said a petulant fellow once to John Taylor, the editor of the *Sun* newspaper, "you are not such a rare scholar as you imagine—I consider you an everyday man." "Do you?" was the answer. "And I consider you only a *weak* man."

Pleasant Pursuits.

PERHAPS in no branch of our manufactures has England become more famous than in that of those prime necessities of the workman—his tools. According to an old-fashioned saying—we were almost saying saw—"Tools are half the battle." It might be said three-fourths. And from the earliest days, when one in boyhood frequented workshops and watched with insatiable curiosity the carpenter turning off those beautiful silky-looking curls, the shavings, it used to be with pride that the men compared their planes, saws, and chisels—talked of their merits; how this or that was a capital bit of stuff; and almost invariably one saw stamped in on the blades of these tools the word "Moseley," or "Moseley and Simpson." Now it was a coarse-toothed, broad-bladed saw called a "rip," or "half-rip;" then one with smaller teeth—a cross-cut; or a small, oblong, thin-bladed fellow, made stiff with a brass back, and used for cutting tenons or dovetailing. The grand treat was to see the great tool chest of the place, a huge, rough, lead-coloured, sea-chest-looking affair, that when opened was a very Aladdin's cave of wonders. For it was like an oyster, rough outside, but full of beauties within; polished inlaid wood drawers opened to show bright, peculiarly formed gouges, chisels, and cutting implements for centre-bits, such as would cut holes with wonderful celerity through the thickest piece of wood. Lower down were planes—not our ordinary friends the jack, trying, and smoothing planes, but refined gentlemen—grooved, curved and contrived in wood and steel, so as to cut the ornamental sash-work or mouldings which ornament the joinery of our houses in door, window, skirting board or panelling. On all these was stamped the magic word "Moseley"; for this is an old firm, established—and evidently on the firmest basis, that of the excellence of its steel—in 1730, since which date its cutlery, lathes, mechanical and gardening tools have become famous all over the world.

A visitor to the establishment is absolutely bewildered by the extent of the ingenious appliances for doing everything, from the roughest bit of carpentry, as boring a hole and knocking in a nail, to the perfect mechanism of the Archimedean centre-bit, which in its simplicity is a little wonder. Passing with longing eyes the manly and also the exquisitely filled youths' tool chests, which one is bound to declare would be the best present that could be given to any ingenious lad, one pauses by the splendid little collection of carving tools, and wonders that ladies do not more frequently practise this artistic work, wood carving, than which it is hardly possible to imagine a more satisfactory pursuit. For wood carving is, after all, as exquisite an art as that of carving stone or marble, under the name of sculpture, and the beautiful pieces of fruit, game, and flowers that can be produced without soiling the hands should send ladies by the score to Messrs. Moseley and Simpson, of King-street, Covent-garden, for the necessary really ornamental implements. There are those, however, who might fear the wood carving would prove too difficult; to

them, then, let us recommend that other charming pursuit, fretwork cutting. A glance in front at the silk of their piano will give them some idea of the beauties of this pursuit, one which, however, it need not be imagined is confined to pianoforte fronts; for the objects that can be cut are legion in number—card racks, brackets, card cases, album covers, picture frames, slide boxes, canterburys, book stands; and if the two, fretwork and carving, were combined, it would require a catalogue to enumerate the beautiful objects that could be executed, from the lowly card case or cigar box to the grand fruit and flower garnished oaken sideboard.

In these days, when there is such an outcry for presents for ladies, why are these plans not more tried? They can be followed for pleasure, better still for profit. Young ladies who would gladly add to the family purse, can learn to do so with ease; or, if they do not wish to add to the common exchequer, their earnings would be capably bestowed in charity. But, it may be asked, how are these beautiful fretworks cut? First, as Mrs. Glasse would say, get your wood, trace upon it, or, if you be artistic, draw your pattern, and then sit down with it to your fretwork machine, which is almost exactly like a sewing machine on its table, as ornamental for a room, and worked in the same way, by a treadle, only instead of a needle darting up and down, it is a tiny steel saw, which cuts the thin wood as you please. One might go on discoursing about the beauties of the lathes, and how great an adjunct such a machine is to a country house, where any gentleman of an ingenious turn of mind may combine the useful and the ornamental, and turn anything he pleases, from a coffee-pot handle to a set of chessmen. He could then discourse learnedly on back gear, collars, mandrels, and chucks; for explanations of which terms we can freely say see catalogues, copies of which we should advise young and old of both sexes to apply for to the firm.

Poulpe for the Pot.

SOME fifteen years ago, I accepted a very pressing invitation from my friend, Emil Mercier, to go and spend a fortnight with him at his place near Biarritz.

It was a charming little villa, with a glorious view of the sea, and the country round was very pretty; but, though Mercier used to go into raptures about it, and said it was "magnifique," to my mind there is scarcely anywhere on the coast of France to compare with the grand, rocky scenery of Cornwall.

Madame Mercier was a bright, animated little hostess, and their two children—a boy and girl, of the respective ages of eight and six—were all very well; but the worst of it was, Emil would persist in taking all three of them whenever we went on fishing excursions.

I thought it too much of a good thing, but of course had to keep it to myself, though I often groaned inwardly when, after Mercier and I had stood with our rods on a jutting rock awaiting a bite for about half an hour, little Frederic, who had been quietly pulling off his shoes and stockings, would take it into his head

to see how far he could walk in, or try with his sister which could throw a pebble nearest to where my line touched the water. We never had much sport, at which I for one was not surprised. But, though we were not successful in our ordinary fishing, we were much more so when trying for octopus. The cuttlefish is very common there, and is known by the name of "poulpe," which seems to me very appropriate.

We went down to the beach one lovely, breezy morning, armed with two rods apiece, of which I had yet to learn the use, for the express purpose of catching cuttlefish. Of the rods, one was over three yards long; the other, which was thicker and stronger, about one yard in length, with a fish-hook fixed on to the end. Mercier set me the example of turning up his trousers to his knees, which I hastened to follow when I had recovered from my astonishment.

"Oh, you musn't be afraid of wetting your feet," said he, laughing; "you won't catch anything if you are."

We passed a man who was just landing his second poulpe—a very fine specimen, its long arms waving about, and clinging to the rod on which he held it. We watched him for some minutes, until he had turned it inside out, I suppose to kill it, for it soon afterwards became motionless.

"Come," said Mercier. "Now's the time."

For the tide was going out; and he threw down his rods on the sand, telling the children to take care of them, and began wading about, and peering down into all the dark corners among the rocks.

Of course I did the same.

Meanwhile, Madame Mercier made herself useful by tying little pieces of white and coloured rag on the end of the longer rods, the reason of which I did not understand at the time.

After that remark about getting my feet wet, I would not hesitate to follow my friend's example; but, all the same, stories that I had heard of gigantic cuttlefish, which wind their long tentacles about a boat, and drag it down, would come into my head, and I gave quite a start when, at the end of about a quarter of an hour of looking about among the rocks, Mercier suddenly called out—

"Here's one! Give me my rods!"

His little boy, who had been preparing himself, tucking up his knickerbockers as far as they would go, rushed into the water, and handed his father's two rods to me, as I was nearest, and I passed them on.

Then I saw what the bits of stuff were for.

Emil took the long rod in his left hand, and the short one in his right, holding it ready while he let the ends of the rags touch the water just over where the cuttlefish lay.

Madame M. and the children came as near as they could, and we all waited in breathless expectation.

"I have him," whispered Mercier, in an excited tone, as a long arm darted out towards the deceptive bait, and, with a quick movement of his right arm, he—I was going to say, hooked it, but it was the poulpe that did that part of the business—and my friend looked round with a very blank expression of countenance.

"I've missed him," he exclaimed. "I don't know how on earth I managed it. Never did such a thing before."

"I hope you never will again," said I, somewhat disheartened.

And the children groaned, "Oh, what a pity!"

The former process had to be repeated, and we soon found another. This time Mercier was more successful. A poulpe, attracted by the rags, threw its arms over the rod, was cleverly hooked by means of the shorter rod, and was safely landed, when we stood and watched how it changed colour and altered in shape, until there was nothing left but a bag of pulpy substance, without form or life. By the time the tide had begun to flow again we were walking homewards, with a basket containing five of different sizes.

"What is the good of taking them home?" I inquired. "They are no use, are they?"

"We shall eat them," replied my hostess, with a look of polite surprise at my ignorance.

"Eat them!" I exclaimed, with a shudder of disgust at the idea.

For they are to my mind very objectionable-looking things; but I did taste them, after all; and one of my pleasantest recollections is the fortnight I spent octopus-fishing with Emil Mercier at Biarritz.

Three Hundred Virgins.

A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS.

CHAPTER XXXI.—CROSSING THE LAVA.

FOR a moment Helston felt a strange sensation of hesitation, the danger was so awful; but mastering this, he ran to the lava and stepped lightly on, to find it bore him, though it yielded and bent, and threatened each moment to give way. But still it bore him, and he stepped cautiously on, till he could reach Laurent's hand, when the greater danger began, for now the lava was called upon to bear double the weight.

Deborah stood gazing at them, and uttered a hoarse scream, for as Helston put forth his strength, and drew his friend from the place where he had fallen, the lava opened, and a puff of sulphurous smoke ascended into the air.

Then the crust bent and crackled beneath the weight imposed upon it, and all seemed over, for Laurent, in his strange fit began to resist, and fought against him who had tried to save him.

The women held their breath, and remained spell-bound, while on the other shore Deborah Burrows threw herself on her face in the sand, and dared not look.

She recovered on the instant, though; and as Helston seized his friend round the waist, and began to carry him to a place of safety, Deborah rushed to help, stepping on to the lava without hesitation, and saving Helston from a stumble, which might have proved fatal.

It seemed miraculous to the young doctor that they should have escaped, and he stood, at last, trembling and giddy, while Laurent, who seemed in nowise troubled, took advantage of his being released, to go wandering away amongst the sands.

The crack that had been made by Laurent's fall seemed to have completely closed at the end of an hour; and then one of the most daring of the im-

soned women took heart, and stepped boldly on to the lava, walked half across in safety, and then tottered, afraid to go farther, as she felt the crust bend and give with her weight.

She would have fallen but for Helston, who ran lightly on over the heated surface, caught her hand, and led her the rest of the way in safety.

"There is no danger now," he said; "only come one at a time, and walk lightly across."

As the words left his lips, 'Thello came to the edge.

"Dah," he exclaimed. "I show de lilly ladies how cross de hot fire."

And, stepping on, he walked over, looking proudly about for applause.

The applause did not follow, and he stalked away.

His example had its effect; for first one and then another gaunt, grimy woman came across; and soon after there was a competition as to who should come first; the result being that Helston, fearing danger, ran over himself.

"Let me go first, doctor."

"No, me—let me go."

"Doctor, it is my turn."

These were some of the speeches that saluted him; for there seemed to be a dread now among the women of being left last upon the little island within an island.

"Form in line, and go across as I order," said Helston, firmly. "There must be no pushing or struggling, lest we have a terrible accident."

"What, don't you think the road will bear us?" cried the women who were about to step on, shrinking back.

"It will bear you, if there is no folly," said Helston, quietly. "Now, number one, lead on."

No one moved, for his words and manner had startled them, and they all shrank from taking the lead.

"Mary Dance, go first," said Helston, firmly.

The girl stepped forward from the rear rank, walked quietly to the edge of the lava river, and walked over, followed at intervals by the rest, as the doctor gave them leave, till the last was across, when Helston picked up the hatchet that had been left and rejoined them.

"Mary Dance," he said, "I place Deborah Burrows in your charge. You must pick out six women to help you, lest she should be violent. I shall look to you for her safety, and for the safety of those against whom she takes a dislike."

Mary Dance bowed her head, and in a quiet, resigned way took her place close behind Deborah, who seemed passively watching all that was going on; while the women crowded together, and, in spite of the desolate prospect before them, chatted together in the joy of their hearts at their rescue from a horrible death; and, as if moved by the same impulse, made for where the waves curled quietly in and broke on the stretch of smooth, soft sand, the sea having resumed its calmness, and the sun shining forth from a sky of unclouded blue.

But for the transparent steam that rose from the lava, and the muddy-looking rivulets that trickled here and there, it would not have been possible to imagine that so terrible a flood of rain had fallen;

but the cool, refreshing feeling in the atmosphere was delicious to those whose skin and lips were cracked by the intense heat they had been called upon to bear.

"Ah," said 'Thello, looking in the direction of the sea, where the greater part of the women had walked straight in, scooping up the cool water and throwing it over their faces, or dipping right in, revelling in the delicious coolness as they cast loose their hair, crusted with ashes and volcanic dust—"Ah, I no wonder dey go have big wash, for I quite 'shamed of some of dem."

'Thello might well be, for their aspect was deplorable; but now, almost without exception, they revelled in the deliciously clear water, to emerge dripping into the golden sunshine, which soon turned the water into vapour.

'Thello took no bath.

"No, sah," he said, "de skin of black genlum not affect by ash and cinder. 'Thello quite clean, I t'ank you."

He seemed in no hurry to attend to anything, for he had picked out a suitable place, dusted the ashes off with a bunch of seaweed, and then called Helston's attention to what he had done.

"Dere, sah!" he exclaimed. "I t'ink you find no such useful pusson here as 'Thello. Dere is quite fine galley, wid fire all hot ready. Dat my part of de business, sah. Now, sah, you supply me wid de 'visions, I cook um, and we get on comfortable."

"You shall have a supply of some kind," said Helston.

And, as they were now out of danger, the next thing to be done was to find provisions.

This he did by forming the women into bands.

One party he sent to obtain such shell-fish as they could find amongst the rocks.

Another was started to collect fruit.

Others, under the guidance of 'Thello, to see if they could discover dead animals half burnt by the lava; while, for his part, he set himself to see to his patients, finding Laurent ready to recognize him, and evidently better.

Time and rest, he decided, must work his cure, even as they must that of Deborah, who was calm and gentle whenever he approached, but restless and hard to manage when he was away.

"Laurent will soon be better, Mary," said Helston, going to her side after his investigation.

"You say that to cheer me up, sir," said the girl, sadly. "You might have told me the truth," she added, in a tone of reproach.

"That is the truth, Mary," he said, quietly. "I think you might have had confidence in me by now."

"Oh, and I have!" cried the girl, impetuously, as she caught his hand in hers, and would have kissed it; but Deborah strode up, and fiercely thrust her back.

"How dare you?" she cried, imperiously.

And then, with flashing eyes, she strode away.

"Poor creature!" said Helston, "I wish I could feel that her reason would return as rapidly as Laurent's."

"But, tell me, sir—I have not dared to ask you before," cried Mary Dance—"where is Grace Monroe?"



"ITS LONG ARMS WAVING ABOUT."—(Page 345.)

"I'd give ten years of my life to know," said Helston, sadly.

And he told in simple words how they had parted. "But could she not have wandered away into the island?" said Mary, who felt sick at heart.

"I fear not," he said. "Poor girl! she misjudged me; and it seems to be a necessity of our position, here, that we should be constantly misjudging each other."

"Mr. Helston," said Mary, with fervour, "whatever I may have felt in the past, I will never misjudge you again. Come what may, I will always believe in you, and trust you in everything."

"Thank you," said Helston, smiling. "Depend upon it, Mary, I shall soon have to put you to the proof."

CHAPTER XXXII.—A STRUGGLE FOR LIFE.

IT was a tremendous responsibility to rest on a man whose heart felt to him as if it were broken, for the whole party seemed perfectly helpless, and to look to him to save them—to feed, house, and clothe; and to do all this he seemed to have about him a desolate island.

However, matters were not quite so black as they seemed; for, on heading an exploration party, whose aim was to discover fruit, he found that a few miles to the northward the island was, though devastated, in a less terrible state. There were fruit trees only partially burned; there were traces of more animals than he could have anticipated to be alive; and, as the shore here grew rocky, there were shell-fish to be obtained; and, could he snare them, or contrive to bring them down by means of bow and arrow, an abundance of birds.

"Come," he said, cheerily, "we shall not starve." As he spoke, his heart seemed to stand still; for, with her arms embracing a rock, and the waves just curling over her partly-submerged form, lay Grace Monroe.

Insensible? Dead?

He could not for the moment tell as, overcoming the sensation of faintness that attacked him, he ran forward, and, catching the poor girl in his arms, bore her to where the sands were soft and dry.

She revived in a short time, but was so weak that a kind of litter of boughs had to be contrived to bear her to a place of safety, where, for explanation, she had naught to tell, only that she had wandered away, lost herself, and was striving to get back by the shore, when she fell, overcome by hunger and weariness.

The coming of the exploring party was but just in time; for before they started back the spot where Grace Monroe had lain insensible was covered by the returning tide.

The little colony was in excellent spirits, for the search of the explorers had quite equalled their expectations.

'Thello was in high glee over a roasted pig. There were quantities of a kind of rock oyster, that they knew from experience to be excellent eating, and a fair supply of food had been brought in—enough in all to enable the starving party to feast amply before seeking rest at nightfall on the soft, rain-washed sands.

Helston's great trouble was about Deborah, for though she had made no movement, he had seen her eyes flash as Grace was borne into their midst; and in her state he knew that she only wanted opportunity to put in execution some one or other of her savage intents.

The lava was so much hardened on the following day, that those who did not mind daring the suffocating heat that radiated from its surface, had no difficulty in traversing it.

And taking Laurent with him, believing that engaging his attention was the better way of helping the cure he hoped to effect, Helston made for the spot where the ship had lain, in the hope that some traces of it might be left unburned.

He was not disappointed, for the ship had been so low in the sand, that though it was burned off to a level with the lava, it was evident that if the crust were removed, a few articles that might prove of value could be dug out from the depths of the hold.

This, however, was entirely a matter for the future, as nothing could be done until the lava had cooled, and this would probably take weeks.

To Helston's great delight, Laurent showed signs of interest in his proceedings; but he was still haunted by the dread of the serpent, and in his most sensible moments became suddenly seized with a desire to hunt about, in a crouching attitude, for the deadly enemy from which he had escaped.

Hastening back, Helston found his flock troubled at his absence; for the parties who had been collecting shell-fish came back with evil reports of their scarcity, and the cry arose—

"What shall we do when the shell-fish are all eaten?"

"The sea is big enough to supply us all with fish," said Helston, smiling.

And, amidst a general laugh, he set several of the women to work unravelling the cotton of a couple of the least damaged dresses, while others had to spin this between their fingers into thread, which was in turn made into a fishing line.

In the course of a few hours, he had four decent lines; and, while these were making, Helston had to contrive hooks.

From a great corking-pin that one of the women had he manufactured a famous hook; the glowing lava enabling him, with his knife and the hatchet-edge, to turn a good barb, the sharpening of the point being entrusted to one of the women.

A couple of crochet needles, fortunately possessed by another woman, formed two hooks that were looked upon as treasures, while inferior ones of a small size were contrived out of hair pins, doubled and bound to give them strength.

Quite a party assembled, gaunt with hunger, and doubtful, to see the lines baited and thrown in. For there were not wanting sceptics who did not believe in the success of the venture.

The hooking, however, of a goodly-sized fish, and its subsequent landing, was hailed with delight; and when the tide began to come in, and the fish bit, and were captured freely, the joy of all present knew no bounds, a dozen women setting to work at once to make more lines, which they did better and stronger than the first; while 'Thello, with a grin of

delight, set two women to work to clean the fish, whose intestines attracted others by the thousand, and he proceeded to cook the take upon his lava oven.

The great shells of the rock oysters supplied them with plates; and as the fish were caught in abundance, the little colony feasted sumptuously for the first time since the catastrophe.

But fish, and abundance of pure water that gurgled over the sands to the sea, were not deemed by Helston to be sufficient, so he busied himself in contriving some weapon with which he could bring down birds, or an occasional wild pig.

He lay thinking out his plans one night after a weary day, and then slept, to dream that Grace was smiling upon him, instead of keeping entirely aloof and avoiding all explanation.

It was but a dream; but he was conscious that she had nearly recovered, and he felt that so long as he could do his duty to those who were with him he must wait patiently for the change that he knew must, sooner or later, come.

He had his plans ready by the break of day, and set to work busily chipping one of the great pearl shells into an arrow-head, which, after roughly shaping out, he proceeded to grind on a rock.

One was completed, and he was at work upon another, when, to his great joy, a voice at his elbow said—

"I can do those for you, Helston."

He turned to find Laurent pale and thin, but with a very different look upon his face to that which it had borne for days past, and Helston shook him heartily by the hand.

"Very—very glad to find you so much better," he said.

"Yes," said Laurent, with a peculiar look, "I thought I had been ill; for I have been dreaming horribly of a great serpent attacking me, and that I was constantly hunting it. It rose, of course, out of the horrible eruption; but, Helston, how did we get away if the place was surrounded by fire?"

"Waited till the lava hardened," said Helston, quietly, thinking it better not to enter into particulars as Laurent seemed weak.

He handed him the pieces of shell, and vacated his place by the stone, when Laurent worked busily over his task, and Helston began to shape arrows out of some splinters of pine that were hard and dry, the tree having been scorched by the volcanic fire.

He was less hopeful about his bow; but he had cut down a stout, shapely bush of some hard wood, and in a few hours he was furnished with the necessary weapons, with which he started that morning, in company with Laurent and a band of the women, to collect shell-fish on the rocky shore eight or nine miles north, and there try the effect of his new scheme.

It succeeded beyond his expectations; for the birds clustered thickly together, so that it was seldom that he did not transfix one, which was transferred to the general stock.

This was a new source of supply; and he determined that a dozen of the women should be furnished with bows and arrows to keep up the supply,

so that, what with the collection of shell-fish, the sea birds that would be shot, and the fish caught, there was no fear of present starvation.

Still, with over three hundred mouths to feed, Helston felt that other plans must be adopted.

Fortunately, the weather remained delicious, and already a faint blush of green was beginning to appear here and there upon the blasted soil, while the trees that had been spared by the devastating ash-storm were budding forth afresh. Taken altogether, there was enough to show that in a month or two the island would begin again to show some of its former beauty; while as there was no present prospect of their being set free, Helston and Laurent discussed together the possibility of constructing some shelter before the rainy time should come; and as wood was so scarce, the only way seemed to be to try and dig away the crust of lava from the bottom of the ship's hull, where investigation had a second time shown them that there, beneath a mass of charcoal, was wood, and probably cases and tubs, with implements that would be invaluable. So it was determined that a certain number of stakes should be sharpened, and with these to dig, and the largest shells for shovels, a strong party should attack the lava, if it proved on inspection to be sufficiently cool to allow of the attempt.

As soon as it was decided upon to try what good fortune should attend them at the ship, one morning a party of about forty, guided by Laurent and Helston, set forth for the remains of the wreck.

They were all armed with long stakes, sharply pointed and hardened by cutting with the axe a hole through the lava crust, and thrusting them into a place where the volcanic mineral was still in a molten state.

In fact, this heat had been a blessing to them during the cold nights, sleeping as they did without the slightest protection but the sand they heaped around them to keep off the wind, for the lava was still in too heated a state to allow of its being broken into fragments of which they could build a hut.

In addition to the pointed stakes, each woman had her shovel—that is to say, a great shell to act as scoop—while Helston carried the one axe they possessed.

As they went on, the two men discussed the possibility of building a great hut of the fragments of rock on the coast farther north, and this they decided to do.

"Only we shall have to wait a year or two for wood and leaves to cover it in," said Laurent.

"Unless we can find uncharred boards at the bottom of the ship's hold," said Helston.

By this time they had reached the lava which covered in the ship, and Helston shuddered as he thought of the horrible scene when the vessel seemed to blaze up like a match.

To their great joy, they found that, though surrounded and partially covered by lava, fully half of the vessel's extent was covered in with charcoal and thick ashes, which were easily loosened by their stakes, and dug out freely.

They all began then scraping and clearing out this *débris*, hoping to find something that would render their unprovided state more bearable, when

there was a shout, and, turning sharply, 'Thello came panting up.

"Mass' Helston—Mass' Laurent, come quick. Lot of Indian fellows landed and seize de women, and I nearly kilt!"

There was a wound on 'Thello's forehead bleeding freely in token of the truth of his statement, and on looking in the direction in which he had come, not only were half a dozen canoes of a large size visible, but a party of Indians were stealing round the point, club and spear in hand, evidently bent upon attacking the little band of labourers on the remains of the ship.

Our New Exciseman—Griggs.

"SEEN the new exciseman—Griggs?" said old Morley.

"No," said my uncle, puffing away at his long clay. "Say he's a twister, don't they?"

"Yes," said Grange, one of our neighbours. "New brooms sweep clean."

"Making himself very disagreeable," said old Morley. "Great mistake for a young man coming into a town like ours, to go setting everybody against him."

"Must do his duty," said my uncle.

"Yes, of course," said Grange; "but he might do it pleasantly."

"Yes," said Morley, "and not go hunting out things, so as to make folk at head-quarters think how clever he is. He thinks more about promotion than duty, that's my opinion."

"What's he been doing in particular?" said my uncle.

"Been doing?" said Morley. "What aint he been doing? Why, he's running his nose into everything. There aint a malting in the town where he aint found fault, and as to private folks, who keep traps and carriages, he's nipping them awful. But—he! he! he!—ho! ho! ho!—ha! ha! ha!"

"What are you laughing at?" said my uncle.

"He's—he's been down on the doctor for letting his coachman wear a livery button crest, you know, and had him fined."

"Well," said my uncle, "if I were he, I shouldn't call in the doctor if I was ill."

"No, indeed," said Grange. "What a dose he'd get!"

I said nothing, only listened in our snug parlour, where two or three neighbours were assembled to smoke their evening pipe.

I had seen our friend, the new exciseman—a thin, long-nosed, inquisitive-looking man, with his eyes too close to his nose, and a curious twinkle in them, as if they were always on the look-out for something fresh. It was as they said—he had only been a month in the place, and had made himself very obnoxious already; and in a little market town the man who does this is not long before he gets pretty well known, and generally disliked.

I had met the fellow two or three times, and on each occasion he had looked me all over, as if to say:

"Now, what has this chap got excisable about him? I wonder whether he keeps a horse?"

The consequence of his prying tendencies and in-

quisitive questions was, that he was on more than one occasion rather hoaxed, to the great delight of all the townspeople; but he grew cunning after his adventure with Mrs. Wiggins, for some one in confidence told him the old lady, who lived out on the common, and had carried on business for years as the principal laundress, had had a horse for the last four years, and paid no duty.

Off went Griggs one morning in high glee, chuckling and rubbing his hands, to see Mrs. Wiggins's horse; and, after a parley, she showed it to him, covered with newly-ironed things, at the fire.

Two or three of us were in the High-street, ready to see him come back; and I believe he vowed vengeance on me, though I was innocent of the trick, for he looked yellow at me and went straight by.

Some one tried it on again; but you can't catch old birds with chaff, they say, the second time; and he would not go to Bumpus, the harness-maker's, to see the saddle horse for which he paid no duty—one made of beech, which stood in the shop.

He was too cautious after being bitten once, but he made up for it by summoning several of the respectable inhabitants.

Poor old Mrs. Verey was one, and she had to pay for her little four-wheel invalid carriage style of thing, drawn by a pony—Griggs declaring that the wheels were above the exempted size.

Then little widow Digby got in trouble about her licence at the shop, all through ignorance, poor woman.

Next, the young doctor who kept a boy to clean knives and carry a basket with the physic bottles, was mulcted for his man servant.

Soon after, old Butts was in an awful scrape for bringing a cart with beer and refreshments into the cricket field—old Butts of the Red Lion, you know—on the day when we played *Stokely Parva*.

The bench did not like it, but they were obliged to inflict a pretty good fine on old Butts; but the chairman said it should make no difference to his licence at the Brewster sessions; for everybody respected Butts, and the county magistrates used to have their carriages and traps put up there on justices' days.

There were numbers more instances of Mr. Griggs's pleasant little ways, for he was indefatigable; and the way in which he was disliked was so great that, though he had a splendid tenor voice and was a good musician, the choir threatened to strike if he was admitted, and the Harmonic Society, held at the Red Lion, voted against him to a man.

Griggs had been in the town about three months, and had utterly refused to be hoaxed any more, saying he was too cunning now, when one day he walked into our shop.

I was there, helping my uncle, who was the principal chemist, and I saw the old gentleman's eyes open a little; but he subsided into his usual calm way as Griggs advanced, his restless eyes running all over the shop, lighting on me, and then giving a nasty flash of dislike.

"Oh, my dear friend," I thought to myself, "I do hope you have brought a prescription to be made up. I would like to mix it a leetle stronger."

Nothing of the kind, for Griggs stared at my uncle across the counter, and putting on the unpleasant

manner of a disagreeable, cross-examining barrister with a bad case.

"Mr. Raby, I think?" he said.

"Yes, my name is Raby," said my uncle, quietly.

"What can I have the pleasure—"

"Stop a minute, please," said Griggs. "You sell patent medicines?"

"Yes," said my uncle. "Edward, will you attend to this—"

"My business is with you, Mr. Raby," said Griggs, pompously. "Will you favour me with a glance at your patent medicine licence?"

"Really," said my uncle, hesitating, "such a course as this is—"

"Unusual, eh? Yes, exactly, Mr. Raby," said the fellow, chuckling; "but you have all been asleep here lately, and I have come to wake you up. Your licence, if you please."

"Your predecessor—I believe you are the new exciseman, sir?"

"My name is Griggs, sir, of the Inland Revenue," said our visitor, pompously; "and my predecessor was—"

"A gentleman whom we tradesmen all respected, Mr. Griggs, of the Inland Revenue," said my uncle, quietly.

"He was asleep half his time, sir," said Griggs.

"I dare say he was," said my uncle. "He was an elderly man, and ten to twelve hours' sleep were, no doubt, necessary at his age."

"Will you show me your licence, sir?" said Griggs, growing very red in the face.

"Well, really," said my uncle, "I don't know that I am bound to produce it to you."

"I am Her Majesty's representative, sir," said Griggs, haughtily. "Your licence, if you please."

My uncle went to his desk, and began turning over papers; and as I wondered what was coming—for I knew the licence was just inside the pigeon-hole—I saw Griggs' face glow with pleasure; for he thought he had got my uncle on the hip, and that he was trying to gain time.

"If you have no licence, sir," said Griggs, taking out notebook and pencil, "you had better confess it at once."

"Oh, I have the licence, sir," said my uncle.

And he produced it, while I stood with the pestle in my hand, longing to throw it at our inquisitor's head.

Griggs took the paper with a snatch, and looked over it with an aspect of disappointed malice creeping over his face—for it was, of course, all right; and he returned it with a grunt, as my uncle received it with a bow.

"Stop," said Griggs then, "I have not done with you, sir, yet." And, barring his wig and gown, he looked more like the crabbed counsellor than ever. "You keep a trap, I believe?"

"Indeed?" said my uncle.

"Yes, I have been informed so," said Griggs.

"Well," said my uncle, hesitating—"yes, I do."

"Ha!" said Griggs, smiling, and looking as much as to say "I've got you now"—"Is your name painted on that trap?"

"N—no," said my uncle.

"Do you use it in your trade?"

"N—no."

"Have you a licence—have you paid the duty for that trap?"

"Well, no," said my uncle.

Griggs made a second entry in his pocket-book, for he had noted the first admission.

"Ha!" said Griggs. "And had you that trap last year?"

"Yes," said my uncle, hesitating.

"And did you pay duty for it then?"

"No," said my uncle, who looked as if alarmed.

"Ha!" said Griggs again; and his note-book and pencil were again put in requisition. "Now, sir, if you please, tell me why you omitted to apply for a licence for that trap?"

"Well, really," said my uncle, "I did not think it necessary."

Note-book again.

"Very good, sir," said Griggs, evidently meaning it was very bad for my uncle. "Now, then, if you please. How many does that trap hold?—is it a waggone!"

"Oh, no," said my uncle.

"Then, how many does it hold?"

"Five," said my uncle. "Well, you might get in six."

Note-book again, and Mr. Griggs smiled with satisfaction. He had got another victim, and already my uncle was figuring for a fine before the bench.

"Now, sir. Is it a four-wheeled trap?"

"No," said my uncle.

"Two-wheeled, then?"

"Oh, dear, no," said my uncle.

"Then, how many wheels has it?" said Griggs, pausing, pencil in hand.

"None at all," said my uncle, coolly.

"What the dickens do you mean, sir?" cried Griggs, angrily. "Why, what sort of a trap is it?"

"A mousetrap," said my uncle, as serious as a judge.

Griggs opened his mouth and stared, literally petrified.

"Here it is, Mr. Griggs," I cried, bringing it from behind the counter, and holding it out; for we were infested with mice. "Patent sort, sir, double-action, sets itself, and mice catch themselves, regular see-saw, tipper-top, down goes the side, and—"

"Ha! ha! ha! ha!"

You might have heard our shrieks of laughter across the street as Griggs buttoned up his note-book, and strode out of the shop.

He never troubled us again.

I am very sorry, and I know it was very wrong; but the very next Sunday I was sitting in church, when Griggs came in, and sat just opposite to me.

No sooner did I catch sight of his face than I felt as if I had got an earthquake. I tried hard, thought of the place I was in, but all in vain—I felt that I must laugh if I were to die for it; and I only saved my character by covering my face with my handkerchief, and rushing out of the building.

We are often hard-up for news in our local paper, consequently this was in as a paragraph the very next week under "Town Events":—

"SUDDEN SEIZURE.—Our respected young townsman, Mr. Raby, junior, was seized last Sunday with a violent bleeding of the nose while in church. He was compelled to leave the sacred edifice at once, and on inquiry we find that it was due to a spasmodic attack, but he is now much better."

So I was, but not until I had laughed fit to crack my sides.

The Egotist's Note-book.

LORD Lytton has roused the indignation of the Anglo-Indians to an almost explosive pitch. His lordship may be an excellent administrator, but his notions of viceregal etiquette are, according to the official mind, of the most astounding character. He not only receives the native chiefs affably and without reserve, but he actually salaams to his more distinguished visitors. The Veneerings and Red Tape people are horrified, and foretell nothing less than the downfall of the British sway in India. Let us hope it will not be so bad as that, although it would not be a matter of surprise if some such terrible disaster resulted from the exhibition of a little politeness on the part of a Government official.

A curious way of taking revenge was brought to light the other day at the Middlesex sessions, where a man was sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment for the confidence trick. He gave the name of John M'Intyre, which a warder of that name from Coldbath Fields Prison subsequently declared had been assumed by the prisoner out of spite, to degrade it, on account of a conviction having been obtained by the warder.

A correspondent of the *Echo*, who deserves all praise for his wisdom, though his idea is not new, proposes that as dogs are taxed, there should also be a tax on cats. He says if the owners of cats would only keep them in their own houses and yards they would not be so intolerable; but when cats are allowed to trouble a whole neighbourhood with their jackal-like shrieks and yowls through the night, jump into our areas, from whence they make their frightened exit at the cost of a pane of glass, or have to be tempted into the house by milk, and captured the following morning; make a home for themselves unbidden in our coal-cellars, from whence their green malicious eyes and occasional spittings keep the servants at a respectful distance, until in desperation they are hunted out, to appear in the same spot some hours afterwards—for these and many more minor miseries which these animals entail, we ask, why are not cats taxed, so that at least these nuisances may be diminished?

Considerable commotion has just been caused at the Brighton Aquarium by a singular escapade by a young alligator, which had been placed with three or four older specimens in a pond in the new tropical room. A day or two since, the little pachyderm, which is about two years old and eighteen inches in length, was missed from its favourite corner. The attention of the curator, Mr. Lawler, was di-

rected to the matter, and noticing something unusual about the jaws of one of the larger alligators, he had the reptile's mouth gently prised open, upon which the missing little one was found to be inside. The "baby" was at once withdrawn, tail foremost, and appeared to be none the worse for its adventure, saving a somewhat severe abrasion just above its left hind leg. The two alligators both came from South America, and have shared the pond in peace for about six weeks; and from the generally pacific disposition of the larger reptile (which measures over five feet) it is conjectured that the little one had of its own accord unsuspectingly crawled into its open jaws. The authorities, considering the confidence to be rather misplaced, have prevented a repetition of the feat by giving the innocent infant separate accommodation in another part of the building.

A gentleman writes to the *Times*, *à propos* of the "law's delay," that, in 1875, a Mr. William Crook died, leaving £200 to the "Deaf and Dumb Asylum at Hertford." As there is not, and never has been, such an institution at Hertford, the executors resolved to pay the money into the Marylebone County Court, to abide the decision of a judge. Three claimants appeared, and the case was to be heard on the 21st of March last. It was adjourned until the 6th of April, and then again until the 3rd of May, when the trial came off. The judge, however, deferred judgment until the 6th of October; and since then nothing has been heard of the money, which the correspondent supposes still remains in the hands of the court. What credulity! Does this simple-minded gentleman imagine that the solicitors and counsel, representing three claimants, work for nothing? And what is £200 among so many?

We are to be made comfortable, if not safe, on the railways at last, for it is said that several of the large companies are about to adopt a new system of warming their carriages. Pipes passing beneath the floors of the carriages of every class will be connected with the engine, and heated vapour passed into them. One of the advantages of the system will be that the travellers will be able to regulate the temperature of carriages in which they are travelling by means of an index handle inside each compartment.

Now that winter has come, and ladies are looking forward to many a pleasant evening spent in the enjoyment of the dance, they often forget the attendant fatigue, until the exhaustion of the following day reminds them that every pleasure has its alloy. This fatigue is in great measure produced by the tight ligature or garter with which the stockings are fastened, hindering the free circulation of the blood. Medical men are unanimous in declaring the use of garters to be a most fruitful source of disease. Every lady desiring health and comfort should at once provide herself with a pair of the new patent stocking suspenders, made by Mr. Almond, of 9 and 10, Little Britain, London. The price is only 3s. per pair, or any draper, or post free for two extra stamps.

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